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M. H. H. H.

PARADISE LOST.

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T W E L V E B O O K S.

The A U T H O R

J O H N M I L T O N.

L O N D O N:

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I N

PARADISUM AMISSAM

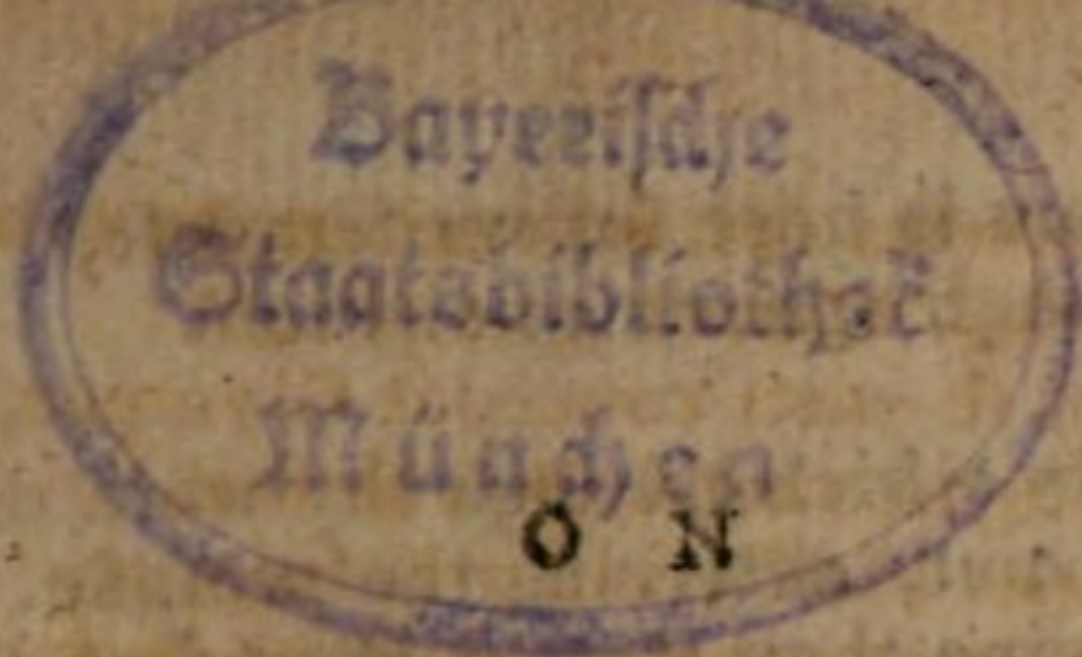
SUMMI POETÆ

JOANNIS MILTONI.

QUI legis Amissam Paradisum, grandia magni
Carmina Miltoni, quid nisi cuncta legis?
Res cunctas, et cunctarum primordia rerum,
Et fata, et fines continet iste liber.
Intima panduntur magni penetralia mundi,
Scribitur et toto quicquid in orbe latet:
Terræque, tractusque maris, cœlumque profundum,
Sulphureumque Erebi, flammivomumque specus:
Quæque colunt terras, pontumque, et Tartara cæca,
Quæque colunt summi lucida regna poli:
Et quodcunque ullis conclusum est finibus usquam,
Et sine fine Chaos, et sine fine Deus:
Et sine fine magis, si quid magis est sine fine,
In Christo erga homines conciliatus amor.
Hæc qui speraret quis crederet esse futura?
Et tamen hæc hodie terra Britannia legit.
O quantos in bella duces! quæ protulit arma!
Quæ canit, et quanta prælia dira tuba!
Cœlestes acies! atque in certamine cœlum!
Et quæ cœlestes pugna deceret agros!
Quantus in æthereis tollit se Lucifer armis!
Atque ipso graditur vix Michæle minor!
Quantis, et quam funestis concurritur iris,
Dum ferus hic stellas protegit, ille rapit!

Dum vulfos montes ceu tela reciproca torquent,
Et non mortali desuper igne pluunt:
Stat dubius cui se parti concedat Olympus,
Et metuit pugnae non superesse suae.
At simul in caeliis Messiae insignia fulgent,
Et currus animes, armaque digna Deo,
Horrendumque rotæ strident, et sæva rotarum
Erumpunt torvis fulgura luminibus,
Et flammæ vibrant, et vera tonitrua rauco
Admissis flammis insonuere polo:
Excidit attonitis mens omnis, et impetus omnis,
Et cassis dextris irrita tela cadunt;
Ad pœnas fugiunt, et ceu foret Orcus asylum,
Infernis certant condere se tenebris.
Cedite Romani Scriptores, cedite Graii,
Et quos fama recens vel celebravit anus.
Hæc quicunque leget tantum cecinisse putabit
Mæonidem ranas, Virgilium culices.

SAMUEL BARROW, M. D.



PARADISE LOST.

WHEN I beheld the Poet blind, yet bold,
In slender book his vast design unfold,
Messiah crown'd, God's reconcil'd decree,
Rebelling angels, the forbidden tree,
Heav'n, Hell, Earth, Chaos, all; the argument
Held me a while misdoubting his intent,
That he would ruin (for I saw him strong)
The sacred truths to fable and old song,
(So Samson grop'd the temple's posts in spite)
The world o'erwhelming to revenge his sight.

Yet as I read, soon growing less severe,
I lik'd his project, the success did fear;
Through that wide field how he his way should find,
O'er which lame faith leads understanding blind;
Lest he perplex'd the things he would explain,
And what was easy he should render vain.

Or if a work so infinite he spann'd,
Jealous I was that some less skilful hand
(Such as disquiet always what is well,
And by ill imitating would excel)
Might hence presume the whole creation's day
To change in scenes, and show it in a play.

Pardon me, mighty Poet, nor despise
My causeless, yet not impious, surmise.
But I am now convinc'd, and none will dare
Within thy labours to pretend a share.
Thou hast not mis'd one thought that could be fit,
And all that was improper, dost omit:

So that no room is here for writers left,
But to detect their ignorance or theft.

That majesty which through thy work doth reign,
Draws the devout, deterring the profane.
And things divine thou treat'st of in such state
As them preserves, and thee, inviolate.
At once delight and horror on us seize,
Thou sing'st with so much gravity and ease;
And above human flight dost soar aloft
With plume so strong, so equal, and so soft.
The bird nam'd from that Paradise you sing
So never flags, but always keeps on wing.

Where couldst thou words of such a compass find?
Whence furnish such a vast expence of mind?
Just Heav'n thee like Tiresias to requite
Rewards with prophecy thy loss of sight.

Well might'st thou scorn thy readers to allure
With tinkling rime, of thy own sense secure;
While the Town-Bays writes all the while and spells,
And like a pack-horse tires without his bells:
Their fancies like our bushy-points appear,
The poets tag them, we for fashion wear.
I too transported by the mode offend,
And while I mean to praise, thee must commend
Thy verse created like thy theme sublime,
In number, weight, and measure, needs not rime.

ANDREW MARVEL.

T H E V E R S E.

THE measure is English heroic verse without rhyme, as that of Homer in Greek, and of Virgil in Latin; rhyme being no necessary adjunct, or true ornament of poem or good verse, in longer works especially, but the invention of a barbarous age, to set off wretched matter and lame metre; graced indeed, since, by the use of some famous modern poets, carried away by custom, but much to their own vexation, hindrance, and constraint to express many things otherwise, and for the most part worse than else they would have expressed them. Not without cause therefore some, both Italian and Spanish poets of prime note, have rejected rhyme both in longer and shorter works, as have also long since our best English tragedies, as a thing of itself, to all judicious ears, trivial and of no true musical delight; which consists only in apt numbers, fit quantity of syllables, and the sense variously drawn out from one verse into another, not in the jingling sound of like endings, a fault avoided by the learned ancients both in poetry and all good oratory. This neglect then of rhyme so little is to be taken for a defect, though it may seem so perhaps to vulgar readers, that it rather is to be esteemed an example set, the first in English, of ancient liberty recovered to heroic poem, from the troublesome and modern bondage of rhiming.

THE ARGUMENT.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK I.

THE ARGUMENT.

This first book proposes, first, in brief, the whole subject, Man's disobedience, and the loss thereupon of Paradise wherein he was placed: Then touches the prime cause of his fall, the Serpent, or rather Satan in the Serpent; who revolting from God, and drawing to his side many legions of Angels, was by the command of God driven out of Heaven with all his crew into the great deep. Which action passed over, the poem hastes into the midst of things, presenting Satan with his Angels now fallen into Hell, described here, not in the center (for Heaven and Earth may be supposed as yet not made, certainly not yet accursed) but in a place of utter darkness, fitliest called Chaos: Here Satan with his Angels lying on the burning lake, thunder-struck and astonished, after a certain space recovers as from confusion, calls up him who next in order and dignity lay by him; they confer of their miserable fall. Satan awakens all his legions, who lay till then in the same manner confounded: They rise, their numbers, array of battle, their chief leaders named, according to the idols known afterwards in Canaan and the countries adjoining. To these Satan directs his speech, comforts them with hope yet of regaining Heaven, but tells them lastly of a new world and new kind of creature to be created, according to an antient prophecy or report in Heaven; for that Angels were long before this visible creation, was the opinion of many antient Fathers. To find out the truth of this prophecy, and what to determine thereupon he refers to a full council. What his associates thence attempt. Pandemonium, the palace of Satan, rises, suddenly built out of the deep: The infernal peers there sit in council.

PARADISE LOST.

B O O K I.

OF Man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat, 5
Sing heav'nly Muse, that on the secret top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
That shepherd, who first taught the chosen feed,
In the beginning how the Heav'ns and Earth
Rose out of Chaos : Or if Sion hill 10
Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flow'd
Fast by the oracle of God ; I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above th' Aonian mount, while it pursues 15
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.
And chiefly Thou, O Spi'rit, that dost prefer
Before all temples th' upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for Thou know'st ; Thou from the first
Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread 20
Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast abyss,
And mad'st it pregnant : what in me is dark
Illumin, what is low raise and support ;
That to the heighth of this great argument
I may assert eternal Providence, 25
And justify the ways of God to Men.

Say first, for Heav'n hides nothing from thy view,
Nor the deep tract of Hell, say first what cause
Mov'd our grand parents, in that happy state,
Favour'd of Heav'n so highly, to fall off 30
From their Creator, and transgress his will
For one restraint, lords of the world besides?
Who first seduc'd them to that foul revolt?
Th' infernal Serpent; he it was, whose guile,
Stirr'd up with envy and revenge, deceiv'd 35
The mother of mankind, what time his pride
Had cast him out from Heav'n, with all his host
Of rebel Angels, by whose aid aspiring
To set himself in glory' above his peers
He trusted to have equall'd the most High, 40
If he oppos'd; and with ambitious aim
Against the throne and monarchy of God
Rais'd impious war in Heaven and battle proud
With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power
Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' ethereal sky, 45
With hideous ruin and combustion, down
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
In adamantin chains and penal fire,
Who durst defy th' Omnipotent to arms.
Nine times the space that measures day and night 50
To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
Lay vanquish'd, rolling in the fiery gulf,
Confounded though immortal: But his doom
Reserv'd him to more wrath; for now the thought
Both of lost happiness and lasting pain 55
Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes,
That witness'd huge affliction and dismay
Mix'd with obdurate pride and stedfast hate:
At once, as far as Angels ken, he views
The dismal situation waste and wild; 60
A dungeon horrible on all sides round
As one great furnace flam'd, yet from those flames
No light, but rather darkness visible
Serv'd only to discover sights of woe,
Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace 65
And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
That comes to all; but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
With ever-burning sulphur unconsum'd:

Such place eternal Justice had prepar'd 70
For those rebellious, here their pris'on ordain'd
In utter darkness, and their portion set
As far remov'd from God and light of Heav'n,
As from the center thrice to th' utmost pole.
O how unlike the place from whence they fell ! 75
There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelm'd
With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,
He soon discerns, and welt'ring by his side
One next himself in pow'r, and next in crime,
Long after known in Palestine, and nam'd 80
Beelzebub. To whom th' Arch-Enemy,
And thence in Heav'n call'd Satan, with bold words
Breaking the horrid silence, thus began.

If thou beest he ; but O how fallen ! how chang'd
From him, who in the happy realms of light 85
Cloth'd with transcendent brightness didst outshine
Myriads though bright ! If he whom mutual league,
United thoughts and counsels, equal hope
And hazard in the glorious enterprize,
Join'd with me once, now misery hath join'd 90
In equal ru'in : into what pit thou seest
From what highth fall'n, so much the stronger prov'd
He with his thunder : and till then who knew
The force of those dire arms ? yet not for those,
Nor what the potent victor in his rage 95
Can else inflict, do I repent or change,
Though chang'd in outward lustre, that fix'd mind,
And high disdain from sense of injur'd merit,
That with the Mightiest rais'd me to contend,
And to the fierce contention brought along 100
Innumerable force of Spirits arm'd,
That durst dislike his reign, and me preferring,
His utmost pow'r with adverse pow'r oppos'd
In dubious battle on the plains of Heaven,
And shook his throne. What though the field be lost ?
All is not lost ; th' unconquerable will, 106
And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield,
And what is else not to be overcome ;
That glory never shall his wrath or might 110
Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace
With suppliant knee, and deify his power,

Who from the terror of this arm so late
 Doubted his empire; that were low indeed,
 That were an ignominy' and shame beneath 110
 This downfal; since by fate the strength of Gods
 And this empyreal substance cannot fail,
 Since through experience of this great event
 In arms not worfe, in foresight much advanc'd,
 We may with more successful hope resolve 125
 To wage by force or guile eternal war,
 Irreconcilable to our grand foe,
 Who now triumphs, and in th' excess of joy
 Sole reigning holds the tyranny of Heaven.

So spake th' apostate Angel, though in pain, 125
 Vaunting aloud, but rack'd with deep despair:
 And him thus answer'd soon his bold compeer.

O Prince, O Chief of many throned Powers,
 That led th' imbattel'd Seraphim to war
 Under thy conduct, and in dreadful deeds 130
 Fearless, endanger'd Heav'n's perpetual king,
 And put to proof his high supremacy,
 Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate;
 Too well I see and rue the dire event,
 That with sad overthrow and foul defeat 135
 Hath lost us Heav'n, and all this mighty host
 In horrible destruction laid thus low,
 As far as Gods and heav'nly essences
 Can perish: for the mind and spi'rit remains
 Invincible, and vigour soon returns, 140
 Though all her glory' extinct, and happy state
 Here swallow'd up in endless misery.

But what if he our conqu'ror (whom I now
 Of force believe almighty, since no less
 Than such could have o'erpow'r'd such force as ours)
 Have left us this our spi'rit and strength entire 146
 Strongly to suffer and support our pains,
 That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,
 Or do him mightier service as his thralls
 By right of war, whate'er his business be 150
 Here in the heart of Hell to work in fire,
 Or do his errands in the gloomy deep;
 What can it then avail, though yet we feel
 Strength undiminish'd, or eternal being
 To undergo eternal punishment?

Whereto with speedy words th' Arch-Fiend reply'd.

Fall'n Cherub, to be weak is miserable 156
Doing or suffering: but of this be sure,
To do aught good never will be our task,
But ever to do ill our sole delight, 160
As be'ing the contrary to his high will
Whom we resist. If then his providence
Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
Our labour must be to pervert that end,
And out of good still to find means of evil; 165
Which oft-times may succeed, so as perhaps
Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb
His inmost counsels from their destin'd aim.
But see the angry victor hath recall'd
His ministers of vengeance and pursuit 170
Back to the gates of Heav'n: the sulphurous hail
Shot after us in storm, o'erblown hath laid
The fiery surge, that from the precipice
Of Heav'n receiv'd us falling; and the thunder
Wing'd with red lighting and impetuous rage, 175
Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
To bellow through the vast and boundless deep.
Let us not slip th' occasion, whether scorn,
Or satiate fury yield it from our foe.
Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild. 180
The seat of desolation, void of light,
Save what the glimmering of these livid flames
Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend
From off the tossing of these fiery waves,
There rest, if any rest can harbour there, 185
And re-assembling our afflicted Powers,
Consult how we may henceforth most offend
Our enemy, our own loss how repair,
How overcome this dire calamity,
What reinforcement we may gain from hope; 190
If not what resolution from despair.

Thus Satan talking to his nearest mate
With head uplift above the wave, and eyes
That sparkling blaz'd, his other parts besides
Prone on the flood, extended long and large 195
Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge
As whom the fables name of monstrous size,
Titanian, or Earth-born, that warr'd on Jove,
Briareos or Typhon, whom the den

By antient Tarsus held, or that sea-beast 200
Leviathan, which God of all his works
Created hugest that swim th' ocean stream :
Him haply slumb'ring on the Norway foam
The pilot of some small night-founder'd skiff
Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell, 205
With fixed anchor in his scaly rind
Moors by his side under the lee, while night
Invests the sea, and wished morn delays :
So stretch'd out huge in length the Arch-Fiend lay
Chain'd on the burning lake, nor ever thence 210
Had ris'n or heav'd his head, but that the will
And high permission of all-ruling Heaven
Left him at large to his own dark designs,
That with reiterated cimes he might
Heap on himself damnation, while he sought 215
Evil to others, and enrag'd might see
How all his malice serv'd but to bring forth
Infinite goodness, grace and mercy shown
On Man by him seduc'd, but on himself
Treble confusion, wrath and vengeance pour'd. 220
Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
His mighty stature ; on each hand the flames
Driv'n backward slope their pointed spires, and roll'd
In billows, leave i' th' midst a horrid vale.
Then with expanded wings he steers his flight 225
Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air
That felt unusual weight, till on dry land
He lights, if it were land that ever burn'd
With solid, as the lake with liquid fire ;
And such appear'd in hue, as when the force 230
Of subterranean wind transports a hill
Torn from Pelorus, or the shatter'd side
Of thund'ring Ætna, whose combustible
And fuel'd entrails thence conceiving fire,
Sublim'd with mineral fury, aid the winds, 235
And leave a singed bottom all involv'd
With stench and smoke : Such resting found the sole
Of unblest'd feet. Him follow'd his next mate,
Both glorying to have 'scap'd the Stygian flood
As Gods, and by their own recover'd strength, 240
Not by the sufferance of supernal Power.

Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,

Said then the lost Arch-Angel, this the seat
That we must change for Heav'n, this mournful gloom
For that celestial light? Be' it so, since he 245
Who now is Sov'reign can dispose and bid
What shall be right: farthest from him is best,
Whom reas'on hath equall'd, force hath made supreme
Above his equals. Farewel happy fields,
Where joy for ever dwells: Hail horrors, hail 250
Infernal world, and thou profoundest Hell
Receive thy new possessor; one who brings
A mind not to be chang'd by place or time.
The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heav'n. 255
What matter where, if I be still the same,
And what I should be, all but less than he
Whom thunder hath made greater? Here at least
We shall be free; th' Almighty hath not built
Here for his envy, will not drive us hence: 260
Here we may reign secure, and in my choice
To reign is worth ambition though in Hell:
Better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heaven.
But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,
Th' associates and copartners of our loss, 265
Lie thus astonish'd on th' oblivious pool,
And call them not to share with us their part
In this unhappy mansion, or once more
With rallied arms to try what may be yet
Regain'd in Heav'n, or what more lost in Hell? 270

So Satan spake, and him Beelzebub
Thus answer'd. Leader of those armies bright,
Which but th' Omnipotent none could have foil'd,
If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge
Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft 275
In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge
Of battle when it rag'd, in all assaults
Their surest signal, they will soon resume
New courage and revive, though now they lie
Groveling and prostrate on yon lake of fire, 280
As we erewhile, astounded and amaz'd,
No wonder, fall'n such a pernicious height.

He scarce had ceas'd when the superior Fiend
Was moving tow'ard the shore; his pond'rous shield,
Ethereal temper, massy, large and round, 285

Behind him cast ; the broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views
At evening from the top of Fesole,
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands, 290
Rivers or mountains in her spotty globe.
His spear, to equal which the tallest pine
Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast
Of some great ammiral, were but a wand,
He walk'd with to support uneasy steps 295
Over the burning marle, not like those steps
On Heav'n's azure, and the torrid clime
Smote on him fore besides, vaulted with fire :
Nathless he so indur'd, till on the beach
Of that inflamed sea he stood, and call'd 300
His legions, Angel-forms, who lay intranc'd
Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks
In Vallombrosa, where th' Eturian shades
High over-arch'd imbrow'r ; or scatter'd sedge
Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion arm'd 305
Hath vex'd the Red-sea coast, whose waves o'erthrew
Bustiris and his Memphian chivalry,
While with perfidious hatred they pursu'd
The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld
From the safe shore their floating carcasses 310
And broken chariot wheels : so thick bestrown
Abject and lost lay these, covering the flood,
Under amazement of their hideous change.
He call'd so loud, that all the hollow deep
Of Hell resounded. Princes, Potentates, 315
Warriors, the flow'r of Heav'n, once yours, now lost,
If such astonishment as this can seize
Eternal Spi'rits ; or have you chos'n this place
After the toil of battle to repose
Your wearied virtue, for the ease you find 320
To slumber here, as in the vales of Heav'n ?
Or in this abject posture have ye sworn
To' adore the conqueror ? who now beholds
Cherub and Seraph rolling in the flood
With scatter'd arms and ensigns, till anon 325
His swift pursuers from Heav'n gates discern
Th' advantage, and descending tread us down
Thus drooping, or with linked thunderbolts

Transfix us to the bottom of this gulf.
Awake, arise, or be for ever fall'n. 330
They heard, and were abash'd, and up they sprung
Upon the wing, as when men wont to watch
On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,
Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.
Nor did they not perceive the evil plight 335
In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;
Yet to their general's voice they soon obey'd
Innumerable. As when the potent rod
Of Amram's son, in Egypt's evil day,
Wav'd round the coast, up call'd a pitchy cloud 340
Of locusts, warping on the eastern wind,
That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung
Like night, and darken'd all the land of Nile:
So numberless were those bad Angels seen
Hovering on wing under the cope of Hell 345
'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires;
Till, as a signal giv'n, th' up-lifted spear
Of their great Sultan waving to direct
Their course, in even balance down they light
On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain; 350
A multitude, like which the populous north
Pour'd never from her frozen loins, to pass
Rhene or the Danaw, when her barbarous sons
Came like a deluge on the south and spread
Beneath Gibraltar to the Lybian sands. 355
Forthwith from every squadron and each band
The heads and leaders thither haste where stood
Their great commander; Godlike shapes and forms
Excelling human, princely dignities,
And pow'rs that erst in Heaven sat on thrones; 360
Though of their names in heavn'ly records now
Be no memorial, blotted out and raz'd
By their rebellion from the books of life.
Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve
Got them new names, till wand'ring o'er the earth, 365
Through God's high sufferance for the tri'al of man,
By falsities and lies the greatest part
Of mankind they corrupted to forsake
God their Creator, and the invisible
Glory of him that made them to transform 370
Oft to the image of a brute, adorn'd

With gay religions full of pomp and gold,
And Devils to adore for Deities:
Then were they known to men by various names,
And various idols through the Heathen world. 375
Say, Muse, their names then known, who first, who last,
Rous'd from the slumber, on that fiery couch,
At their great empe'ror's call, as next in worth
Came singly where he stood on the bare strand,
While the promiscuous croud stood yet aloof. 380
The chief were those who from the pit of Hell
Roaming to seek their prey on earth, durst fix
Their seats long after next the seat of God,
Their altars by his altar, Gods ador'd
Among the nations round, and durst abide 385
Jehovah thund'ring out of Sion, thron'd
Between the Cherubims; yea, often plac'd
Within his sanctuary itself their shrines,
Abominations; and with cursed things
His holy rites and solemn feasts profan'd, 390
And with their darkness durst affront his light.
First Moloch, horrid king, besmear'd with blood
Of human sacrifice, and parents tears,
Though for the noise of drums and timbrels loud
Their childrens cries unheard, that pass'd through fire
To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite 396
Worship'd in Rabba and her watry plain,
In Argob and in Basan, to the stream
Of utmost Arnon. Nor content with such
Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart 400
Of Solomon he led by fraud to build
His temple right against the temple' of God
On that opprobrious hill, and made his grove
The pleasant valley' of Hinnom, Tophet thence
And black Gehenna call'd, the type of Hell. 405
Next Chemos, th' obscene dread of Moab's sons,
From Aroar to Nebo, and the wild
Of southmost Abarim; in Hesebon
And Horonaim, Seon's realm, beyond
The flow'ry dale of Sibma clad with vines 410
And Eleale to the Asphaltic pool.
Peor his other name, when he entic'd
Hrael in Sittim on their march from Nile
To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.

Yet thence his lustful orgies he inlarg'd 415
Ev'n to that hill of scandal, by the grove
Of Moloch homicide; lust hard by hate;
Till good Josiah drove them thence to Hell.
With these came they, who from the bord'ring flood
Of old Euphrates to the brook that parts 420
Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names
Of Baalim and Ashtaroh, those male,
These feminine. For spirits when they please
Can either sex assume, or both; so soft
And uncompounded is their essence pure, 425
Not ty'd or manac'd with joint or limb,
Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,
Like cumbrous flesh; but in what shape they chuse
Dilated or condens'd, bright or obscure,
Can execute their airy purposes, 430
And works of love or enmity fulfil.
For those the race of Israel oft forsook
Their living strength, and unfrequented left
His righteous altar, bowing lowly down
To bestial gods; for which their heads as low 435
Bow'd down in battle, sunk before the spear
Of despicable foes. With these in troop
Came Astoreth, whom the Phœnicians call'd
Astarte, Queen of Heav'n, with crescent horns;
To whose bright image nightly by the moon 440
Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs;
In Sion also not unsung, where stood
Her temple on th' offensive mountain, built
By that uxorious king, whose heart, though large,
Beguil'd by fair idolatresses, fell 445
To idols foul. Thammuz came next behind,
Whose annual wound in Lebanon allur'd
The Syrian damsels to lament his fate
In amorous ditties all a summer's day,
While smooth Adonis from his native rock 450
Ran purple to the sea, suppos'd with blood
Of Thammuz yearly wounded: the love-tale
Infected Sion's daughters with like heat,
Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch
Ezekiel saw, when by the vision led 455
His eye survey'd the dark idolatries
Of alienated Judah. Next came one

Who mourn'd in earnest, when the captive ark
Maim'd his brute image, head and hands lopt off
In his own temple, on the grunsel edge, 460
Where he fell flat, and sham'd his worshippers :
Dagon his name, sea-monster, upward man
And downward fish : yet had his temple high
Rear'd in Azotus, dreaded through the coast
Of Palestine, in Gath and Ascalon, 465
And Accaron and Gaza's frontier bounds.
Him follow'd Rimmon, whose delightful seat
Was fair Damascus, on the fertile banks
Of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid streams.
He also 'gainst the house of God was bold : 470
A leper once he lost, and gain'd a king,
Ahaz his sottish conqu'ror, whom he drew
God's altar to disparage and displace
For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn
His odious offerings, and adore the gods 475
Whom he had vanquish'd. After these appear'd
A crew who under names of old renown,
Osiris, Isis, Orus, and their train,
With monstrous shapes and forceries abus'd
Fanatic Egypt and her priests, to seek 480
Their wand'ring gods disguis'd in brutish forms
Rather than human. Nor did Israel 'scape
'Th' infection, when their borrow'd gold compos'd
The calf in Oreb ; and the rebel king
Doubled that sin in Bethel and in Dan, 485
Likening his Maker to the grazed ox,
Jehovah, who in one night, when he pass'd
From Egypt marching, equall'd with one stroke
Both her first-born and all her bleating gods.
Belial came last, than whom a sp'rit more lewd 490
Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love
Vice for itself : to him no temple stood
Or altar smok'd ; yet who more oft than he
In temples and at altars, when the priest
Turns atheist, as did Eli's sons, who fill'd 495
With lust and violence the house of God ?
In courts and palaces he also reigns,
And in luxurious cities, where the noise
Of riot ascends above their loftest towers,
And injury and outrage : And when night

Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons
Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.
Witness the streets of Sodom, and that night
In Gibeah, when the hospitable door
Expos'd a matron to avoid worse rape. 505
These were the prime in order and in might;
The rest were long to tell, though far renown'd,
Th' Ionian gods, of Javan's issue held
Gods, yet confess'd later than Heaven and Earth,
Their boasted parents: Titan Heav'n's first born, 510
With his enormous brood, and birthright seiz'd
By younger Saturn; he from mightier Jove
His own and Rhea's son, like measure found;
So Jove usurping reign'd: these first in Crete
And Ida known, thence on the snowy top 515
Of cold Olympus rul'd the middle air,
Their highest Heaven; or on the Delphian cliff,
Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds
Of Doric land; or who with Saturn old
Fled over Adria to th' Hesperian fields, 520
And o'er the Celtic roam'd the utmost isles.

All these and more came flocking; but with looks
Downcast and damp, yet such wherein appear'd
Obscure some glimpse of joy, to' have found their chief
Not in despair, to' have found themselves not lost 525
In loss itself; which on his count'nance cast
Like doubtful hue: but he his wonted pride
Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore
Semblance of worth not substance, gently rais'd
Their fainting courage, and dispell'd their fears. 530
Then strait commands that at the warlike sound
Of trumpets loud and clarions be uprear'd
His mighty standard: that proud honour claim'd
Azazel as his right, a Cherub tall;
Who forthwith from the glitt'ring staff unfurl'd 535
Th' imperial ensign, which full high advanc'd
Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,
With gems and golden lustre rich imblaz'd,
Seraphic arms and trophies; all the while
Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds: 540
At which the universal host up sent
A shout that tore Hell's concave, and beyond
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.

All in a moment through the gloom were seen
Ten thousand banners rise into the air 545
With orient colours waving : with them rose
A forest huge of spears : and thronging helms
Appear'd, and ferried shields in thick array
Of depth immeasurable : anon they move
In perfect phalanx to the Dorian mood 550
Of flutes and soft recorders ; such as rais'd
To hight of noblest temper heroes old
Arming to battle, and instead of rage
Deliberate valour breath'd, firm and unmov'd
With dread of death to flight or foul retreat ; 555
Nor wanting pow'r to mitigate or swage
With solemn touches troubled thoughts, and chase
Anguish, and doubt, and fear, and sorrow', and pain,
From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they
Breathing united force with fixed thought 560
Mov'd on in silence to soft pipes that charm'd
Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil ; and now
Advanc'd in view they stand, a horrid front
Of dreadful length and dazzling arms, in guise
Of warriors old with order'd spear and shield, 565
Awaiting what command their mighty chief
Had to impose : He through the armed files
Darts his experienc'd eye, and soon traverse
The whole battalion views, their order due,
Their visages and stature as of gods ; 570
Their number last he sums. And now his heart
Distends with pride, and hard'ning in his strength
Glories : for never since created man,
Met such embody'd force, as nam'd with these
Could merit more than that small infantry 575
Warr'd on by cranes ; though all the giant brood
Of Phlegra with th' heroic race were join'd
That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side
Mix'd with auxiliar gods ; and what refounds
In fable or romance of Uther's son 580
Begirt with British and Armoric knights ;
And all who since, baptiz'd or infidel,
Jousted in Aspramont or Montalban,
Damasco, or Marocco, or Trebifond,
Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore, 585
When Charlemain with all his peerage fell

By Fontarabbia. Thus far these beyond
Compare of mortal prowess, yet observ'd
Their dread commander: he above the rest
In shape and gesture proudly eminent 590
Stood like a tow'r; his form had yet not lost
All her original brightness, nor appear'd
Less than Arch-Angel ruin'd, and th' excess
Of glory' obscur'd; as when the sun new risen
Looks through the horizontal misty air 595
Shorn of his beams, or from behind the moon
In dim eclipse disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs. Darken'd so, yet shone
Above them all th' Arch-Angel: but his face 600
Deep scars of thunder had intrench'd, and care
Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows
Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride
Waiting revenge: cruel his eye, but cast
Signs of remorse and passion to behold 605
The fellows of his crime, the followers rather
(Far other once beheld in bliss) condemn'd
For ever now to have their lot in pain,
Millions of spirits for his fault amerc'd
Of Heav'n, and from eternal splendors flung 610
For his revolt, yet faithful how they stood,
Their glory wither'd: As when Heav'n's fire
Hath scath'd the forest oaks, or mountain pines,
With singed top their stately growth, though bare
Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepar'd 615
To speak; whereat their doubled ranks they bend
From wing to wing, and half inclose him round
With all his peers: attention held them mute.
Thrice he assay'd, and thrice, in spite of scorn,
Tears, such as angels weep, burst forth: at last 620
Words interwove with sighs found out their way.

O myriads of immortal sp'rits, O powers
Matchless, but with th' Almighty, and that strife
Was not inglorious, though th' event was dire,
As this place testifies, and this dire change 625
Hateful to utter: but what pow'r of mind
Foreseeing or presaging, from the depth
Of knowledge past or present, could have fear'd,
How such united force of gods, how such

As stood like these, could ever know repulse? 630
 For who can yet believe, though after loss,
 That all these puissant legions, whose exile
 Hath emptied Heav'n, shall fail to re-ascend
 Self-rais'd, and repossess their native seat?
 For me be witnesses all the host of Heaven, 635
 If counsels different, or danger shunn'd
 By me, have lost our hopes. But he who reigns
 Monarch in Heav'n, till then as one secure
 Sat on his throne, upheld by old repute,
 Consent or custom, and his regal state 640
 Put forth at full, but still his strength conceal'd,
 Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.
 Henceforth his might we know, and know our own,
 So as not either to provoke, or dread
 New war, provok'd; our better part remains 645
 To work in close design by fraud or guile,
 What force effected not: that he no less
 At length from us may find, who overcomes
 By force, hath overcome but half his foe.
 Space may produce new worlds; whereof so rife 650
 There went a fame in Heav'n, that he ere long
 Intended to create, and therein plant
 A generation, whom his choice regard
 Should favour equal to the sons of Heaven:
 Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps 655
 Our first eruption, thither or elsewhere:
 For this infernal pit shall never hold
 Celestial sp'rits in bondage, nor th' abyss
 Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts
 Full counsel must mature: peace is despair'd, 660
 For who can think submission? War then, war
 Open or understood must be resolv'd.

He spake: and to confirm his words, outflew
 Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
 Of mighty cherubim; the sudden blaze 665
 Far round illumin'd Hell: highly they rag'd
 Against the High'st, and fierce with grasped arms
 Clash'd on their sounding shields the din of war,
 Hurling defiance tow'rd the vault of Heaven.

There stood a hill not far, whose grisly top 670
 Belch'd fire and rolling smoke; the rest entire
 Shone with a glossy scurf, undoubted sign

That in his womb was hid metallic ore,
The work of sulphur. Thither wing'd with speed
A numerous brigade hasten'd : as when bands 675
Of pioneers with spade and pickax arm'd
Forerun the royal camp, to trench a field,
Or cast a rampart. Mammon led them on,
Mammon, the least erected sp'rit that fell
From Heav'n, for e'en in Heav'n his looks and thoughts
Were always downwards bent, admiring more 681
The riches of Heav'n's pavement, trodden gold,
Than aught divine or holy else enjoy'd
In vision beatific : by him first
Men also, and by his suggestion taught, 685
Ransack'd the center, and with impious hands
Rifled the bowels of their mother earth
For treasures better hid. Soon had his crew
Open'd into the hill a spacious wound,
And digg'd out ribs of gold. Let none admire 690
That riches grow in Hell ; that soil may best
Deserve the precious bane. And here let those
Who boast in mortal things, and wond'ring tell
Of Babel, and the works of Memphian kings,
Learn how their greatest monuments of fame 695
And strength and art are easily out-done
By spirits reprobate, and in an hour
What in an age they with incessant toil
And hands innumerable scarce perform.
Nigh on the plain in many cells prepar'd, 700
That underneath had veins of liquid fire
Sluc'd from the lake, a second multitude
With wondrous art founded the massy ore
Severing each kind, and scumm'd the bullion dross :
A third as soon had form'd within the ground 705
A various mould, and from the boiling cells
By strange conveyance fill'd each hollow nook,
As in an organ, from one blast of wind,
To many a row of pipes the sound-board breathes.
Anon out of the earth a fabric huge 710
Rose like an exhalation, with the sound
Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet,
Built like a temple, where pilasters round
Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid
With golden architrave ; nor did there want 715

Cornice or freeze, with bossy sculptures graven ;
 The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon,
 Nor great Alcairo such magnificence
 Equall'd in all their glories, to inshrine
 Belus or Serapis their gods, or feat 720
 Their kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove
 In wealth and luxury. Th' ascending pile
 Stood fix'd her stately hight ; and strait the doors
 Opening their brazen folds discover wide
 Within her ample spaces, o'er the smooth 725
 And level pavement : from the arched roof,
 Pendent by subtile magic, many a row
 Of starry lamps and blazing cressets fed
 With naphtha and asphaltus yielded light
 As from a sky. The hasty multitude 730
 Admiring enter'd, and the work some praise
 And some the architect : his hand was known
 In Heav'n by many a towered structure high,
 Where scepter'd Angels held their residence,
 And sat as princes, whom the supreme King 735
 Exalted to such pow'r, and gave to rule,
 Each in his hierarchy, the orders bright.
 Nor was his name unheard or unador'd
 In antient Greece ; and in Ausonian land
 Men call'd him Mulciber ; and how he fell 740
 From Heav'n, they fabled, thrown by angry Jove
 Sheer o'er the crystal battlements ; from morn
 To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,
 A summer's day ; and with the setting sun
 Dropt from the zenith like a falling star, 745
 On Lemnos th' Ægean isle : thus they relate,
 Erring ; for he with this rebellious rout
 Fell long before ; nor aught avail'd him now
 T' have built in Heav'n high tow'rs ; nor did he 'scape
 By all his engines, but was headlong sent 750
 With his industrious crew to build in Hell.

Mean while the winged heralds by command
 Of sov'reign pow'r, with awful ceremony
 And trumpet's sound, throughout the host proclaim
 A solemn council forthwith to be held 755
 At Pandemonium, the high capital
 Of Satan and his peers : their summons call'd
 From every band and squared regiment

By place or choice the worthiest ; they anon
With hundreds and with thousands trooping came 760
Attended : all access was throng'd, the gates
And porches wide, but chief the spacious hall
(Though like a cover'd field, where champions bold
Wont ride in arm'd, and at the Soldan's chair
Defy'd the best of Panin chivalry 765
To mortal combat, or career with lance)
Thick swarm'd, both on the ground and in the air
Brush'd with the hiss of rustling wings. As bees
In spring-time when the sun with Taurus rides,
Pour forth their populous youth about the hive 770
In clusters : they among fresh dews and flowers
Fly to and fro, or on the smoothed plank,
The suburb of their straw-built citadel,
New rubb'd with balin, expatiate and confer
Their state affairs. So thick the airy croud 775
Swarm'd and were straiten'd ; till the signal given,
Behold a wonder ! they but now who seem'd
In bigness to surpass earth's giant sons,
Now less than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room
Throng numberless, like that pigmean race 780
Beyond the Indian mount, or fairy elves,
Whose midnight revels by a forest side
Or fountain some belated peasant sees,
Or dreams he sees, while over-head the moon
Sits arbitress, and nearer to the earth 785
Wheels her pale course, they on their mirth and dance
Intent, with jocond music charm his ear ;
At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.
Thus incorporeal sp'rits to smallest forms
Reduc'd their shapes immense, and were at large, 790
Though without number still amidst the hall
Of that infernal court. But far within,
And in their own dimensions like themselves,
The great Seraphic Lords and Cherubim
In close recess and secret conclave sat 795
A thousand demi-gods on golden seats,
Frequent and full. After short silence then
And summons read, the great consult began.

End of the First Book.

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THE NEW EDITION

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK II.

THE ARGUMENT.

The consultation begun, Satan debates whether another battle be to be hazarded for the recovery of Heaven: some advise it, others dissuade: A third proposal is preferred, mentioned before by Satan, to search the truth of that prophecy or tradition in Heaven concerning another world, and another kind of creature, equal or not much inferior to themselves, about this time to be created: Their doubt who shall be sent on this difficult search; Satan their chief undertakes alone the voyage, is honoured and applauded. The council thus ended, the rest betake them several ways, and to several employments, as their inclinations lead them, to entertain the time till Satan return. He passes on his journey to Hell gates, finds them shut, and who sat there to guard them, by whom at length they are opened, and discover to him the great gulf between Hell and Heaven; with what difficulty he passes through, directed by Chaos, the power of that place, to the sight of this new world which he sought.

PARADISE LOST.

B O O K II.

HIGH on a throne of royal state, which far
Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,
Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand
Show'rs on her kings barbaric pearl and gold,
Satan exalted sat, by merit rais'd 5
To that bad eminence; and from despair
Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires
Beyond thus high; insatiate to pursue
Vain war with Heav'n; and, by success untaught,
His proud imaginations thus display'd. 10

Pow'rs and dominions, deities of Heaven;
For since no deep within her gulf can hold
Immortal vigour, though oppress'd and fall'n,
I give not Heav'n for lost. From this descent
Celestial virtues rising, will appear 15
More glorious and more dread than from no fall,
And trust themselves to fear no second fate.
Me, though just right, and the fix'd laws of Heaven,
Did first create your leader; next, free choice;
With what besides, in counsel or in fight, 20
Hath been atchiev'd of merit; yet this loss
Thus far at least recover'd, hath much more
Establish'd in a safe unenvied throne
Yielded with full consent. The happier state
In Heav'n, which follows dignity, might draw 25
Envy from each inferior: but who here
Will envy whom the highest place exposes

Foremost to stand against the Thund'rer's aim,
Your bulwark, and condemns to greatest share
Of endless pain? where there is then no good 30
For which to strive, no strife can grow up there
From faction: for none sure will claim in Hell
Precedence; none, whose portion is so small
Of present pain, that with ambitious mind
Will covet more. With this advantage then 35
To union, and firm faith, and firm accord,
More than can be in Heav'n, we now return
To claim our just inheritance of old,
Surer to prosper than prosperity
Could have assur'd us; and by what best way, 40
Whether of open war, or covert guile,
We now debate: who can advise, may speak.

He ceas'd; and next him Moloch, scepter'd king,
Stood up, the strongest and the fiercest spirit
That fought in Heav'n, now fiercer by despair: 45
His trust was with th' Eternal to be deem'd
Equal in strength; and rather than be less
Car'd not to be all; with that care lost
Went all his fear: of God, or Hell, or worse,
He reck'd not; and these words thereafter spake. 50

My sentence is for open war: of wiles,
More unexpert, I boast not: them let those
Contrive who need; or when they need, not now.
For while they sit contriving, shall the rest,
Millions that stand in arms, and longing wait 55
The signal to ascend, sit ling'ring here
Heav'n's fugitives, and for their dwelling place
Accept this dark opprobrious den of shame,
The prison of his tyranny who reigns
By our delay? no, let us rather chuse, 60
Arm'd with Hell flames and fury, all at once
O'er Heav'n's high tow'rs to force resistless way,
Turning our tortures into horrid arms
Against the torturer; when to meet the noise
Of his almighty engine he shall hear 65
Infernal thunder, and, for lightning, see
Black fire and horror shot with equal rage
Among his angels; and his throne itself
Mix'd with Tartarean sulphur, and strange fire,
His own invented torments. But perhaps 70

The way seems difficult and steep to scale
With upright wing against a higher foe.
Let such bethink them, if the sleepy drench,
Of that forgetful lake benumb not still,
That in our proper motion we ascend 75
Up to our native seat: descent and fall
To us is adverse. Who but felt of late,
When the fierce foe hung on our broken rear
Insulting, and pursu'd us through the deep,
With what compulsion and laborious flight 80
We sunk thus low? Th' ascent is easy then;
Th' event is fear'd; should we again provoke
Our stronger, some worse way his wrath may find
To our destruction; if there be in Hell
Fear to be worse destroy'd; What can be worse 85
Than to dwell here, driv'n out from bliss, condemn'd
In this abhorred deep to utter woe;
Where pain of unextinguishable fire
Must exercise us without hope of end,
The vassals of his anger, when the scourge 90
Inexorably, and the torturing hour
Calls us to penance? More destroy'd than thus
We should be quite abolish'd and expire.
What fear we then? what doubt we to incense
His utmost ire? which to the height enrag'd, 95
Will either quite consume us, and reduce
To nothing this essential; happier far,
Than miserable to have eternal being:
Or if our substance be indeed divine,
And cannot cease to be, we are at worst 100
On this side nothing; and by proof we feel
Our pow'r sufficient to disturb his Heaven,
And with perpetual inroads to alarm,
Though inaccessible, his fatal throne:
Which, if not victory, is yet revenge. 105

He ended frowning, and his look denounc'd
Desp'rate revenge, and battle dangerous
To less than gods. On the other side up rose
Belial, in act more graceful and humane;
A fairer person lost not Heav'n; he seem'd 110
For dignity compos'd and high exploit:
But all was false and hollow; though his tongue
Dropt manna, and could make the worse appear

The better reason, to perplex and dash
Maturest counsels: for his thoughts were low; 115
To vice industrious, but to nobler deeds
Timorous and slothful: yet he pleas'd the ear,
And with persuasive accent thus began.

I should be much for open war, O peers,
As not behind in hate; if what was urg'd, 120
Main reason to persuade immediate war,
Did not dissuade me most, and seem to cast
Ominous conjecture on the whole success:
When he who most excels in fact of arms,
In what he counsels and in what excels 125
Mistrustful, grounds his courage on despair
And utter dissolution, as the scope
Of all his aim, after some dire revenge.

First, what revenge? The tow'rs of Heav'n are fill'd
With armed watch, that render all access 130
Impregnable; oft on th' bord'ring deep
Incamp their legions; or, with obscure wing,
Scout far and wide into the realm of night,
Scorning surprise. Or could we break our way
By force, and at our heels all hell should rise 135
With blackest insurrection, to confound
Heav'n's purest light; yet our great enemy,
All incorruptible, would on his throne
Sit unpolluted; and th' ethereal mould,
Incapable of stain, would soon expel 140
Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire,
Victorious. Thus repuls'd, our final hope
Is flat despair: we must exasperate

Th' almighty victor to spend all his rage,
And that must end us; that must be our cure, 145
To be no more. Sad cure! for who would lose,
Though full of pain, this intellectual being,
Those thoughts that wander through eternity,
To perish rather, swallow'd up and lost
In the wide womb of uncreated night, 150
Devoid of sense and motion? and who knows,
Let this be good, whether our angry foe
Can give it, or will ever? how he can
Is doubtful? that he never will, is sure.

Will he, so wise, let loose at once his ire, 155
Belike through impotence, or unaware,

To give his enemies their wish, and end
Them in his anger, whom his anger saves
To punish endless? Wherefore cease we then?
Say they who counsel war, we are decreed, 160
Reserv'd, and destin'd to eternal woe;
Whatever doing, what can we suffer more,
What can we suffer worse? Is this then worst,
Thus sitting, thus consulting, thus in arms?
What when we fled amain, pursu'd and struck 165
With Heav'n's afflicting thunder, and besought
The deep to shelter us? this Hell then seem'd
A refuge from those wounds: or when we lay
Chain'd on the burning lake? That sure was worse.
What if the breath that kindled those grim fires, 170
Awak'd, should blow them into sev'nfold rage,
And plunge us in the flames? or from above
Should intermitted vengeance arm again
His red right hand to plague us? What if all
Her stores were open'd, and this firmament 175
Of Hell should spout her cataracts of fire,
Impedent horrors, threat'ning hideous fall
One day upon our heads; while we perhaps
Designing or exhorting glorious war,
Caught in a fiery tempest shall be hurl'd 180
Each on his rock transfix'd, the sport and prey
Of wracking whirlwinds; or for ever sunk
Under yon boiling ocean, wrapt in chains;
There to converse with everlasting groans,
Unrespited, unpitied, unrepiv'd, 185
Ages of hopeless end? This would be worse.
War therefore, open or conceal'd, alike
My voice dissuades; for what can force or guile
With him, or who deceive his mind, whose eye
Views all things at one view? he from Heav'n's highth
All these our motions vain sees, and derides; 191
Not more almighty to resist our might,
Than wise to frustrate all our plots and wiles.
Shall we then live thus vile, the race of Heav'n
Thus trampled, thus expell'd, to suffer here 195
Chains and these torments? better these than worse,
By my advice; since fate inevitable
Subdues us, and omnipotent decree,
The victor's will. To suffer, as to do,

Our strength is equal, nor the law unjust 200
That so ordains : this was at first resolv'd,
If we were wise, against so great a foe
Contending, and so doubtful what might fall.
I laugh, when those who at the spear are bold
And vent'rous, if that fail them, shrink and fear, 205
What yet they know must follow, to indure
Exile, or ignominy', or bonds, or pain,
The sentence of their conqu'ror : this is now
Our doom ; which if we can sustain and bear,
Our supreme foe in time may much remit 210
His anger ; and perhaps thus far remov'd,
Not mind us not offending, satisfy'd
With what is punish'd ; whence these raging fires
Will slacken, if his breath stir not their flames.
Our purer essence then will overcome 215
Their noxious vapour ; or inur'd, not feel ;
Or chang'd at length, and to the place conform'd
In temper and in nature, will receive
Familiar the fierce heat, and void of pain ;
This horror will grow mild, this darkness light ; 220
Besides what hope the never-ending flight
Of future days may bring, what chance, what change,
Worth waiting, since our present lot appears
For happy, though but ill ; for ill, not worst,
If we procure not to ourselves more woe. 225

Thus Belial, with words cloth'd in reasons garb,
Counsel'd ignoble ease, and peaceful sloth,
Not peace : and after him thus Mammon spake.

Either to disenthroned the King of Heaven
We war, if war be best, or to regain 230
Our own right lost : him to unthroned we then
May hope, when everlasting Fate shall yield
To fickle Chance, and Chaos judge the strife :
The former vain to hope, argues as vain
The latter : for what place can be for us 235
Within Heav'n's bound, unless Heav'n's Lord supreme
We overpow'r ? Suppose he should relent,
And publish grace to all, on promise made
Of new subjection ; with what eyes could we
Stand in his presence humble, and receive 240
Strict laws impos'd, to celebrate his throne
With warbled hymns, and to his Godhead sing

Forc'd halleluiahs; while he lordly sits
Our envied sov'reign, and his altar breathes
Ambrosial odors and ambrosial flowers, 245
Our servile offerings? This must be our task
In Heav'n, this our delight; how wearisome
Eternity so spent in worship paid
To whom we hate! Let us not then pursue,
By force impossible, by leave obtain'd, 250
Unacceptable, though in Heav'n, our state
Of splendid vassalage; but rather seek
Our own good from ourselves, and from our own
Live to ourselves, though in this vast recess,
Free, and to none accountable, preferring 255
Hard liberty before the easy yoke
Of servile pomp. Our greatness will appear
Then most conspicuous, when great things of small,
Useful of hurtful, prosp'rous of adverse,
We can create; and in what place so e'er 260
Thrive under ev'il, and work ease out of pain,
Through labour and endurance. This deep world
Of darkness do we dread? How oft amidst
Thick clouds and dark doth Heav'n's all-ruling Sire
Chuse to reside, his glory unobscur'd, 265
And with the majesty of darkness round
Covers his throne; from whence deep thunders roar
Must'ring their rage, and Heav'n resembles Hell?
As he our darkness, cannot we his light
Imitate when we please? This desert soil 270
Wants not her hidden lustre, gems and gold;
Nor want we skill or art, from whence to raise
Magnificence; and what can Heav'n show more?
Our torments also may in length of time
Become our elements; these piercing fires 375
As soft as now severe, our temper chang'd
Into their temper; which must needs remove
The sensible of pain. All things invite
To peaceful counsels, and the settled state
Of order, how in safety best we may 280
Compose our present evils, with regard
Of what we are and where; dismissing quite
All thoughts of war. Ye have what I advise.
He scarce had finish'd, when such murmur fill'd
Th' assembly, as when hollow rocks retain 285

The found of blust'ring winds, which all night long
Had rous'd the sea, now with hoarse cadence lull
Seafaring men o'erwatch'd, whose bark, by chance,
Or pinnace, anchors in a craggy bay
After the tempest: such applause was heard 290
As Mammon ended, and his sentence pleas'd,
Advising peace: for such another field
They dreaded worse than Hell: so much the fear
Of thunder and the sword of Michael
Wrought still within them; and no less desire 295
To found this nether empire, which might rise,
By policy, and long process of time,
In emulation opposite to Heaven.

Which when Beelzebub perceiv'd, than whom,
Satan except, none higher sat, with grave 300
Aspect he rose, and in his rising seem'd
A pill'ar of state; deep on his front engraven
Deliberation sat and public care;
And princely counsel in his face yet shone,
Majestic though in ruin: sage he stood 305
With Atlantean shoulders fit to bear
The weight of mightiest monarchies; his look
Drew audience and attention still as night,
Or summer's noon-tide air, while thus he spake.

Thrones and imperial pow'rs, offspring of Heaven,
Ethereal virtues; or these titles now 311
Must we renounce, and changing stile be call'd
Princes of Hell? for so the popular vote
Inclines, here to continue', and build up here
A growing empire; doubtless, while we dream, 315
And know not that the King of Heav'n hath doom'd
This place our dungeon; not our safe retreat
Beyond his potent arm, to live exempt
From Heav'n's high jurisdiction, in new league
Banded against his throne; but to remain 320
In strictest bondage, though thus far remov'd,
Under th' inevitable curb, reserv'd
His captive multitude: for he, be sure,
In highth or depth, still first and last will reign
Sole king, and of his kingdom lose no part 325
By our revolt; but over Hell extend
His empire, and with iron scepter rule
Us here, as with his golden those in Heaven.

What fit we then projecting peace and war?
 War hath determin'd us, and foil'd with loss 330
 Irreparable; terms of peace yet none
 Vouchsaf'd or fought; for what peace will be given
 To us enslav'd, but custody severe,
 And stripes, and arbitrary punishment
 Inflicted? and what peace can we return, 335
 But, to our pow'r, hostility and hate,
 Untam'd reluctance, and revenge, though slow,
 Yet ever plotting how the conqu'ror least
 May reap his conquest, and may least rejoice
 In doing what we most in suffering feel? 340
 Nor will occasion want, nor shall we need
 With dang'rous expedition to invade
 Heav'n, whose high walls fear no assault or siege,
 Or ambush from the deep. What if we find
 Some easier enterprize? There is a place, 345
 (If antient and prophetic fame in Heaven
 Err not) another world, the happy seat
 Of some new race call'd Man, about this time
 To be created like to us, though less
 In pow'r and excellence, but favour'd more 350
 Of him who rules above; so was his will
 Pronounc'd among the gods, and by an oath,
 That shook Heav'n's whole circumference, confirm'd.
 Thither let us bend all our thoughts, to learn
 What creatures there inhabit, of what mould 355
 Or substance; how endued, and what their power,
 And where their weakness; how attempted best,
 By force or subtilty. Though Heav'n be shut,
 And Heav'n's high arbitrator sit secure
 In his own strength, this place may lie expos'd, 360
 The utmost border of his kingdom, left
 To their defence who hold it: here perhaps
 Some advantageous act may be atchiev'd
 By sudden onset, either with Hell fire
 To waste his whole creation; or possess 365
 All as our own, and drive, as we were driven,
 The puny habitants; or, if not drive,
 Seduce them to our party, that their God
 May prove their foe, and with repenting hand
 Abolish his own works. This would surpass 370
 Common revenge, and interrupt his joy

In our confusion, and our joy upraise
In his disturbance; when his darling sons,
Hurl'd headlong to partake with us, shall curse
Their frail original, and faded blifs, 375
Faded so soon. Advise if this be worth
Attempting, or to sit in darkness here
Hatching vain empires. Thus Beelzebub
Pleaded his devilish counsel, first devis'd
By Satan, and in part propos'd: for whence, 380
But from the author of all ill, could spring
So deep a malice, to confound the race
Of mankind in one root, and Earth with Hell
To mingle and involve, done all to spite
The great Creator? But their spite still serves 385
His glory to augment. The bold design
Pleas'd highly those infernal states, and joy
Sparkled in all their eyes; with full assent
They vote: whereat his speech he thus renews.

Well have ye judg'd, well ended long debate, 390
Synod of gods, and like to what ye are,
Great things resolv'd, which from the lowest deep
Will once more lift us up, in spite of fate,
Nearer our antient seat; perhaps in view
Of those bright confines, whence, with neighb'ring arms
And opportune excursion, we may chance 396
Re-enter Heav'n; or else in some mild zone
Dwell not unvisited of Heav'n's fair light
Secure, and at the brightning orient beam
Purge off this gloom; the soft delicious air, 400
To heal the scar of these corrosive fires,
Shall breathe her balm. But first whom shall we send
In search of this new world? Whom shall we find
Sufficient? who shall tempt with wand'ring feet
The dark unbottom'd infinite abyfs, 405
And through the palpable obscure find out
His uncouth way, or spread his airy flight
Upborne with indefatigable wings
Over the vast abrupt, ere he arrive
The happy isle? What strength, what art can then 410
Suffice, or what evasion bear him safe
Through the strict senteries and stations thick
Of angels watching round? Here he had need
All circumspection, and we now no less

Choice in our suffrage; for on whom we send 415
The weight of all and our last hope relies.

This said, he sat; and expectation held
His look suspense, awaiting who appear'd
To second, or oppose, or undertake
The perilous attempt: but all sat mute, 420
Pond'ring the danger with deep thoughts; and each
In others count'nance read his own dismay
Astonish'd. None among the choice and prime
Of those Heav'n-warring champions could be found
So hardy, as to proffer, or accept 425
Alone the dreaded voyage; till, at last,
Satan, whom now transcendent glory rais'd
Above his fellows, with monarcal pride,
Conscious of highest worth, unmov'd thus spake.

O Progeny of Heav'n, empyreal thrones, 430
With reason hath deep silence and demur
Seiz'd us, though undismay'd: long is the way
And hard, that out of Hell leads up to light;
Our prison strong; this huge convex of fire,
Outragious to devour, immures us round 435
Ninefold; and gates of burning adamant
Barr'd over us, prohibit all egress.
These pass'd, if any pass, the void profound
Of unessential Night receives him next
Wide gaping, and with utter loss of being 440
Threatens him, plung'd in that abortive gulf.
If thence he 'scape into whatever world,
Or unknown region, what remains him less
Than unknown dangers, and as hard escape?
But I should ill become this throne, O peers, 445
And this imperial sov'reignty, adorn'd
With splendor, arm'd with pow'r, if aught propos'd
And judg'd of public moment, in the shape
Of difficulty or danger, could deter
Me from attempting. Wherefore do' I assume 450
These royalties, and not refuse to reign,
Refusing to accept as great a share
Of hazard as of honour, due alike
To him who reigns, and so much to him due
Of hazard more, as he above the rest 455
High honour'd sits? Go therefore mighty powers,
Terror of Heav'n, though fall'n; intend at home,

While here shall be our home, what best may ease
The present misery, and render Hell
More tolerable ; if there be cure or charm, 460
To respite, or deceive, or slack the pain
Of this ill mansion : intermit no watch
Against a wakeful foe ; while I abroad
Through all the coasts of dark destruction seek
Deliv'rance for us all : this enterprize 465
None shall partake with me. Thus saying rose
The monarch, and prevented all reply ;
Prudent, lest, from his resolution rais'd,
Others among the chief might offer now
(Certain to be refus'd) what erst they fear'd ; 470
And so refus'd might in opinion stand
His rivals ; winning cheap the high repute,
Which he through hazard huge must earn. But they
Dreaded not more th' adventure, than his voice
Forbidding ; and at once with him they rose ; 475
Their rising all at once was as the sound
Of thunder heard remote. Tow'ards him they bend
With awful reverence prone ; and as a god
Extol him equal to the High'est in Heaven :
Nor fail'd they to express how much they prais'd, 480
That for the general safety he despis'd
His own : for neither do the spirits damn'd
Lose all their virtue ; lest bad men should boast
Their specious deeds on earth, which glory' excites,
Or close ambition varnish'd o'er with zeal. 485
Thus they their doubtful consultations dark-
Ended, rejoicing in their matchless chief :
As when from mountain-tops the dusky clouds
Ascending, while the north-wind sleeps, o'erspread
Heav'n's chearful face, the louring element 490
Scowls o'er the darken'd landskip snow, or shower ;
If chance the radiant sun with farewell sweet
Extend his evening-beam, the fields revive,
The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds
Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings. 495
O shame to men ! devil with devil damn'd
Firm concord holds ; men only disagree
Of creatures rational, though under hope
Of heav'nly grace : and God proclaiming peace,
Yet live in hatred, enmity, and strife 500

Among themselves, and levy cruel wars,
Wasting the earth, each other to destroy :
As if (which might induce us to accord)
Man had not hellish foes enow besides,
That day and night for his destruction wait. 505
The Stygian council thus dissolv'd ; and forth
In order came the grand infernal peers :
Midst came their mighty paramount, and seem'd
Alone th' antagonist of Heav'n, nor less
Than Hell's dread emperor, with pomp supreme, 510
And godlike imitated state ; him round
A globe of fiery seraphim inclos'd
With bright imblazonry, and horrent arms.
Then of their session ended they bid cry
With trumpets regal sound the great result ; 515
Tow'rd the four winds four speedy cherubim
Put to their mouths the sounding alchemy,
By herald's voice explain'd ; the hollow' abyss
Heard far and wide, and all the host of Hell
With deaf'ning shout return'd them loud acclaim. 520
Thence more at ease their minds, and somewhat rais'd
By false presumptuous hope, the ranged powers
Disband, and wand'ring, each his several way
Pursues, as inclination or sad choice
Leads him perplex'd, where he may likeliest find 525
Truce to his restless thoughts, and entertain
The irksome hours, till his great chief return.
Part on the plain, or in the air sublime,
Upon the wing, or in swift race contend,
As at th' Olympian games, or Pythian fields ; 530
Part crub their fiery steeds, or shun the goal
With rapid wheels, or fronted brigades form.
As when, to warn proud cities, war appears
Wag'd in the troubled sky, and armies rush
To battle in the clouds, before each van 535
Prick forth the airy knights, and couch their spears
Till thickest legions close ; with feats of arms
From either end of Heav'n the welkin burns.
Others, with vast Typhœan rage more fell,
Rend up both rocks and hills, and ride the air 540
In whirlwind ; Hell scarce holds the wild uproar.
As when Alcides, from Oechalia crown'd
With conquest, felt th' envenom'd robe, and tore

Through pain up by the roots Theſſalian pines ;
And Lichas from the top of Oeta threw 545
Into th' Euboic ſea. Others more mild,
Retreated in a ſilent valley, ſing,
With notes angelical to many a harp,
Their own heroic deeds and hapleſs fall
By doom of battle ; and complain that fate 550
Free virtue ſhould inthral to force or chance.
Their ſong was partial, but the harmony
(What could it leſs when ſp'rits immortal ſing ?)
Suspended Hell, and took with raviſhment
The thronging audience. In diſcourſe more ſweet 555
(For eloquence the ſoul, ſong charms the ſenſe,)
Others apart ſat on a hill retir'd,
In thoughts more elevate, and reaſon'd high
Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate,
Fix'd fate, free will, foreknowledge abſolute, 560
And found no end, in wand'ring mazes loſt.
Of good and evil much they argued then,
Of happineſs and final miſery,
Paſſion and apathy, and glory' and ſhame,
Vain wiſdom all, and falſe philoſophy : 565
Yet with a pleaſing forcery could charm
Pain for a while, or anguiſh, and excite
Fallacious hope, or arm th' obdured breaſt
With ſtubborn patience, as with triple ſteel.
Another part in ſquadrons and groſs bands, 570
On bold adventure to diſcover wide
That diſmal world, if any clime perhaps
Might yield them eaſier habitation, bend
Four ways their flying march, along the banks
Of four infernal rivers, that diſgorge 575
Into the burning lake their baleful ſtreams ;
Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate ;
Sad Acheron of ſorrow, black and deep ;
Cochytus, nam'd of lamentation loud
Heard on the rueful ſtream ; fierce Phlegethon, 580
Whoſe waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.
Far off from theſe a ſlow and ſilent ſtream,
Lethe, the river of oblivion, rolls
Her watry labyrinth ; whereof who drinks,
Forthwith his former ſtate and be'ing forgets, 585
Forgets both joy and grief, pleaſure and pain.

Beyond this flood a frozen continent
Lies dark and wild, beat with perpetual storms
Of whirlwind and dire hail, which on firm land
Thaws not, but gathers heap, and ruin seems 590
Of antient pile; all else deep snow and ice,
A gulf profound as that Serbonian bog
Betwixt Damietta and mount Casius old,
Where armies whole have sunk: the parching air
Burns froze, and cold performs th' effect of fire. 595
Thither, by harpy-footed furies hal'd,
At certain revolutions all the damn'd
Are brought; and feel by turns the bitter change
Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce;
From beds of raging fire to starve on ice 600
Their soft ethereal warmth, and there to pine
Immoveable, infix'd, and frozen round,
Periods of time; thence hurried back to fire.
They ferry over this Lethean sound
Both to and fro, their sorrow to augment, 605
And wish and struggle, as they pass, to reach
The tempting stream, with one small drop to lose
In sweet forgetfulness all pain and woe,
All in one moment, and so near the brink;
But fate withstands, and to oppose th' attempt 610
Medusa with Gorgonian terror guards
The ford, and of itself the water flies
All taste of living wight, as once it fled
The lip of Tantalus. Thus roving on
In confus'd march forlorn, th' adventurous bands, 615
With shudd'ring horror pale, and eyes aghast
View'd first their lamentable lot, and found
No rest: through many a dark and dreary vale
They pass'd, and many a region dolorous,
O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp, 620
Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death,
A universe of death; which God by curse
Created ev'il, for evil only good,
Where all life dies, death lives, and nature breeds,
Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things, 625
Abominable, inutterable, and worse
Than fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceiv'd,
Gorgons, and Hydra's, and Chimæra's dire.
Mean while the adversary of God and man,

Satan, with thoughts inflam'd of highest design, 630
Puts on swift wings, and tow'rd's the gates of Hell
Explores his solitary flight: sometimes
He scours the right hand coast; sometimes the left;
Now shaves with level wing the deep, then soars
Up to the fiery concave tow'ring high. 635
As when far off at sea a fleet descry'd
Hangs in the clouds, by equinoctial winds
Close sailing from Bengala, or the isles
Of Ternate and Tidore, whence merchants bring
Their spicy drugs: they on the trading flood 640
Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape
Ply stemming nightly tow'rd's the pole. So seem'd
Far off the flying fiend: at last appear
Hell bounds high reaching to the horrid roof,
And thrice three-fold the gates; three folds were brass,
Three iron, three of adamantin rock, 646
Impenetrable, impal'd with circling fire,
Yet unconsum'd. Before the gates there sat
On either side a formidable shape;
The one seem'd woman to the waste, and fair, 650
But ended foul in many a scaly fold
Voluminous and vast, a serpent arm'd
With mortal sting: about her middle round
A cry of hell-hounds never ceasing bark'd
With wide Cerberean mouths full loud, and rung 655
A hideous peal; yet, when they list, would creep,
If ought disturb their noise, into her womb,
And kennel there, yet there still bark'd and howl'd,
Within unseen. Far less abhorr'd than these
Vex'd Scylla bathing in the sea that parts 660
Calabria from the hoarse Trinacrian shore:
Nor uglier follow the night-hag, when call'd
In secret, riding through the air she comes,
Lur'd with the smell of infant-blood, to dance
With Lapland witches, while the lab'ring moon 665
Eclipses at their charms. The other shape,
If shape it might be call'd that shape had none
Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb,
Or substance might be call'd that shadow seem'd,
For each seem'd either; black it stood as night, 670
Fierce as ten furies, terrible as hell,
And shook a dreadful dart; what seem'd his head,

The likeness of a kingly crown had on.
Satan was now at hand, and from his seat
The monster moving, onward came as fast 675
With horrid strides; Hell trembled as he strode.
Th' undaunted fiend what this might be admir'd,
Admir'd, not fear'd; God and his Son except,
Created thing nought valu'd he nor shunn'd;
And with disdainful look thus first began. 680

Whence and what art thou, execrable shape,
That dar'st, though grim and terrible, advance
Thy miscreated front athwart my way
To yonder gates? through them I mean to pass,
That be assur'd, without leave ask'd of thee; 685
Retire, or taste thy folly, and learn by proof,
Hell-born, not to contend with sp'rits of Heaven.

To whom the goblin full of wrath reply'd.
Art thou that traitor-angel, art thou he,
Who first broke peace in Heav'n, and faith, till then 690
Unbroken, and in proud rebellious arms
Drew after him the third-part of Heav'n's sons
Conjur'd against the High'st; for which both thou
And they, outcast from God, are here condemn'd
To waste eternal days in woe and pain? 695
And reckon'st thou thyself with spr'its of Heav'n,
Hell-doom'd, and breath'st defiance here and scorn
Where I reign king; and, to enrage thee more,
Thy king and lord? Back to thy punishment,
False fugitive, and to thy speed add wings; 700
Lest with a whip of scorpions I pursue
Thy ling'ring, or with one stroke of this dart
Strange horror seize thee, and pangs unfelt before.

So spake the grisly terror, and in shape,
So speaking and so threat'ning, grew tenfold 705
More dreadful and deform; on th' other side,
Incens'd with indignation Satan stood,
Unterrify'd, and like a comet burn'd,
That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge
In th' arctic sky, and from his horrid hair 710
Shakes pestilence and war. Each at the head
Levell'd his deadly aim; their fatal hands
No second stroke intend; and such a frown
Each cast at th' other, as when two black clouds,
With Heav'n's artillery fraught, come rattling on 715

Over the Caspian, then stand front to front,
Hovering a space, till winds the signal blow
To join their dark encounter in mid air :
So frown'd the mighty combatants, that Hell
Grew darker at their frown; so match'd they stood; 720
For never but once more was either like
To meet so great a foe : and now great deeds
Had been atchiev'd, whereof all Hell had rung,
Had not the snaky forcerefs, that sat
Fast by hell-gate, and kept the fatal key, 725
Ris'n, and with hideous outcry rush'd between.

O father, what intends thy hand, she cry'd,
Against thy only son? What fury', O son,
Possesses thee, to bend that mortal dart
Against thy father's head? and know'st for whom; 730
For him who sits above, and laughs the while
At thee, ordain'd his drudge, to execute
Whate'er his wrath, which he calls justice, bids;
His wrath, which one day will destroy ye both.

She spake, and at her words the hellish pest 735
Forbore; then these to her Satan return'd.

So strange thy outcry, and thy words so strange
Thou interposest, that my sudden hand
Prevented, spares to tell thee yet by deeds
What it intends; till first I know of thee, 740
What thing thou art, thus double form'd, and why,
In this infernal vale first met, thou call'st
Me father, and that phantasm call'st my son :
I know thee not; nor ever saw till now
Sight more detestable than him and thee. 745

T' whom thus the portrefs of hell-gate reply'd.
Hast thou forgot me then, and do I seem
Now in thine eye so foul? once deem'd so fair
In Heav'n, when at th' assembly, and in sight
Of all the seraphim with thee combin'd 750
In bold conspiracy against Heav'n's king,
All on a sudden miserable pain
Surpris'd thee, dim thine eyes, and dizzy swum
In darkness, while thy head flames thick and fast
Threw forth, till on the left side op'ning wide, 755
Likest to thee in shape and count'nance bright,
Then shining heav'nly fair, a goddess arm'd,
Out of thy head I sprung : Amazement seis'd

All th' host of Heav'n; back they recoil'd afraid
At first, and call'd me Sin, and for a sign 760
Portentous held me; but familiar grown,
I pleas'd, and with attractive graces won
The most averse, thee chiefly, who full oft,
Thyself in me thy perfect image viewing,
Becam'st enamour'd, and such joy thou took'st 765
With me in secret, that my womb conceiv'd
A growing burden. Mean while war arose,
And fields were fought in Heav'n; wherein remain'd
(For what could else) to our almighty foe
Clear victory; to our part loss and rout 770
Through all the empyrean: down they fell,
Driv'n headlong from the pitch of Heaven, down
Into this deep, and in the general fall
I also; at which time this pow'rful key
Into my hand was giv'n, with charge to keep 775
These gates for ever shut, which none can pass
Without my opening. Pensive here I sat
Alone, but long I sat not, till my womb,
Pregnant by thee, and now excessive grown,
Prodigious motion felt, and rueful throes. 780
At last this odious offspring whom thou seest,
Thine own begotten, breaking violent way
Tore through my entrails, that with fear and pain
Distorted, all my nether shape thus grew
Transform'd: but he, my inbred enemy, 785
Forth issu'd, brandishing his fatal dart
Made to destroy: I fled, and cry'd out Death!
Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sigh'd
From all her caves, and back resounded Death!
I fled; but he pursu'd (though more, it seems, 790
Inflam'd with lust than rage) and, swifter far,
Me overtook his mother, all dismay'd,
And in embraces forcible and foul
Ingend'ring with me, of that rape begot
These yelling monsters, that with ceaseless cry 795
Surround me, as thou saw'st, hourly conceiv'd
And hourly born, with sorrow infinite
To me; for when they list, into the womb
That bred them they return, and howl, and gnaw
My bowels, their repast; then bursting forth 800
Afresh with conscious terrors vex me round,

That rest or intermission none I find.
Before mine eyes in opposition sits
Grim Death, my son and foe, who sets them on,
And me his parent would full soon devour, 805
For want of other prey ; but that he knows
His end with mine involv'd ; and knows that I
Should prove a bitter morsel, and his bane,
Whenever that shall be ; so fate pronounc'd.
But thou, O father, I forewarn thee, shun 810
His deadly arrow ; neither vainly hope
To be invulnerable in those bright arms,
Though temper'd heav'nly, for that mortal dint,
Save he who reigns above, none can resist.

She finish'd, and the subtle fiend his lore 815
Soon learn'd, now milder, and thus answer'd smooth.

Dear daughter, since thou claim'st me for thy fire,
And my fair son here show'st me, the dear pledge
Of dalliance had with thee in Heav'n, and joys
Then sweet, now sad to mention, through dire change
Befall'n us unforeseen, unthought of ; know 821
I come no enemy, but to set free
From out this dark and dismal house of pain
Both him and thee, and all the heav'nly host
Of sp'rits, that in our just pretences arm'd 825
Fell with us from on high : from them I go
This uncouth errand sole ; and one for all
Myself expose, with lonely steps to tread
Th' unfounded deep ; and through the void immense
To search with wand'ring quest a place foretold 830
Should be, and, by concurring signs, ere now
Created vast and round ; a place of bliss
In the purlieus of Heav'n, and therein plac'd
A race of upstart creatures, to supply
Perhaps our vacant room ; though more remov'd, 835
Left Heav'n, surcharg'd with potent multitude,
Might hap to move new broils : Be this, or aught
Than this more secret, now design'd, I haste
To know ; and this once known, shall soon return,
And bring ye to the place where thou and Death 840
Shall dwell at ease, and up and down unseen
Wing silently the buxom air, embalm'd
With odours ; there ye shall be fed and fill'd
Immeasurably, all things shall be your prey.

He ceas'd, for both seem'd highly pleas'd, and Death
Grinn'd horrible a ghastly smile, to hear 846
His famine should be fill'd; and blest his maw
Destin'd to that good hour: no less rejoic'd
His mother bad, and thus bespake her fire.

The key of this infernal pit by due, 850
And by command of Heav'n's all-pow'rful King,
I keep, by him forbidden to unlock
These adamantine gates; against all force
Death ready stands to interpose his dart,
Fearless to be o'ermatch'd by living might. 855

But what owe I to his commands above
Who hates me, and hath hither thrust me down
Into this gloom of Tartarus profound,
To sit in hateful office here confin'd,
Inhabitant of Heav'n, and heav'nly born, 860
Here in perpetual agony and pain,
With terrors and with clamours compass'd round
Of mine own brood, that on my bowels feed?
Thou art my father, thou my author, thou
My being gav'st me; whom should I obey 865
But thee? whom follow? thou wilt bring me soon
To that new world of light and bliss, among
The gods who live at ease, where I shall reign
At thy right hand voluptuous, as beseems
Thy daughter and thy darling, without end. 870

Thus saying, from her side the fatal key,
Sad instrument of all our woe, she took;
And tow'rd the gate rolling her bestial train,
Forthwith the huge portcullis high up drew,
Which but herself, not all the Stygian powers 875
Could once have mov'd; then in the key-hole turns
Th' intricate wards, and every bolt and bar
Of massy iron or solid rock with ease
Unfastens: on a sudden open fly,
With impetuous recoil and jarring sound, 880
Th' infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
Harsh thunder, that the lowest bottom shook
Of Erebus. She open'd, but to shut
Excell'd her pow'r; the gates wide open stood,
That with extended wings a banner'd host, 885
Under spread ensigns marching, might pass through
With horse and chariots rank'd in loose array;

So wide they stood, and, like a furnace mouth,
Cast forth redounding smoke and ruddy flame.
Before their eyes in sudden view appear 891
The secrets of the hoary deep, a dark
Illimitable ocean, without bound,
Without dimension, where length, breadth, and highth,
And time, and place are lost; where eldest Night
And Chaos, ancestors of nature, hold 895
Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise
Of endless wars, and by confusion stand.
For hot, cold, moist, and dry, four champions fierce,
Strive here for mast'ry, and to battle bring
Their embryon atoms; they around the flag 900
Of each his faction, in their several clans,
Light-arm'd, or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift, or slow,
Swarm populous, unnumber'd as the sands
Of Barca or Cyrene's torrid soil,
Levied to side with warring winds, and poise 905
Their lighter wings. To whom these most adhere,
He rules a moment; Chaos umpire sits,
And by decision more embroils the fray
By which he reigns: next him high arbiter
Chance governs all. Into this wild abyfs, 910
The womb of nature, and perhaps her grave,
Of neither sea, nor shore, nor air, nor fire,
But all these in their pregnant causes mix'd
Confus'dly, and which thus must ever fight,
Unless th' almighty Maker them ordain 915
His dark materials to create more worlds;
Into this wild abyfs the wary fiend
Stood on the brink of Hell, and look'd a while,
Pond'ring his voyage; for no narrow frith
He had to cross. Nor was his ear less peal'd 920
With noises loud and ruinous (to compare
Great things with small) than when Bellona storms,
With all her battering engines bent to rase
Some capital city; or less than if this frame
Of Heav'n were falling, and these elements 925
In mutiny had from her axle torn
The steadfast earth. At last his sail-broad vans
He spreads for flight, and in the furling smoke
Uplifted spurns the ground; thence many a league,
As in a cloudy chair, ascending rides 930

Audacious ; but that feat soon failing, meets
A vast vacuity : all unawares
Fluttering his pennons vain, plumb down he drops
Ten thousand fathom deep, and to this hour
Down had been falling, had not, by ill chance, 935
The strong rebuff of some tumultuous cloud,
Instinct with fire and nitre, hurried him
As many miles aloft : that fury stay'd,
Quench'd in a boggy Syrtis, neither sea,
Nor good dry land : nigh founder'd, on he fares, 940
Trading the crude consistence, half on foot,
Half flying ; behoves him now both oar and sail.
As when a gryphon, through the wilderness
With wing'd course, o'er hill or moory dale,
Pursues the Arimasbian, who by stealth 945
Had from his wakeful custody purloin'd
The guarded gold : So eagerly the fiend
O'er bog, or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare,
With head, hands, wings, or feet pursues his way,
And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies : 950
At length a universal hubbub wild
Of stunning sounds and voices all confus'd,
Borne through the hollow dark, assaults his ear
With loudest vehemence : thither he plies,
Undaunted to meet there whatever power 955
Or spirit of the nethermost abyss
Might in that noise reside, of whom to ask
Which way the nearest coast of darkness lies
Bord'ring on light ; when strait behold the throne
Of Chaos, and his dark pavilion spread 960
Wide on the wasteful deep ; with him enthron'd
Sat sable-vested Night, eldest of things,
The consort of his reign ; and by them stood
Orcus and Ades, and the dreaded name
Of Demogorgon ; Rumour next and Chance, 965
And Tumult and Confusion all embroil'd,
And Discord with a thousand various mouths.

T' whom Satan turning boldly, thus. Ye powers
And spirits of this nethermost abyss,
Chaos and antient Night, I come no spy, 970
With purpose to explore or to disturb
The secrets of your realm, but by constraint
Wand'ring this darksome desert, as my way

Lies through your spacious empire up to light,
Alone, and without guide, half lost, I seek 975
What readiest path leads where your gloomy bounds
Confine with Heav'n; or if some other place,
From your dominion won, th' ethereal King
Possesses lately, thither to arrive
I travel this profound; direct my course: 980
Directed no mean recompense it brings
To your behoof; if I that region lost,
All usurpation thence expell'd, reduce
To her original darkness and your sway
(Which is my present journey) and once more 985
Erect the standard there of antient Night;
Yours be th' advantage all, mine the revenge.

Thus Satan: and him thus the Anarch old,
With faltring speech and visage incompos'd,
Answer'd. I know thee, stranger, who thou art, 990
That mighty leading angel, who of late
Made head against Heaven's King, though overthrown.
I saw and heard, for such a numerous host
Fled not in silence through the frightened deep,
With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout, 995
Confusion worse confounded; and Heav'n-gates
Pour'd out by millions her victorious bands
Pursuing. I upon my frontiers here
Keep residence; if all I can will serve
That little which is left so to defend, 1000
Encroach'd on still through your intestine broils
Weakening the scepter of old Night: first Hell,
Your dungeon, stretching far and wide beneath;
Now lately Heav'n and Earth, another world,
Hung o'er my realm, link'd in a golden chain 1005
To that side Heav'n from whence your legions fell:
If that way be your walk, you have not far;
So much the nearer danger; go, and speed;
Havock, and spoil, and ruin, are my gain.

He ceas'd; and Satan stay'd not to reply, 1010
But glad that now his sea should find a shore,
With fresh alacrity and force renew'd,
Springs upward, like a pyramid of fire,
Into the wild expanse; and through the shock
Of fighting elements, on all sides round 1015
Environ'd, wings his way; harder beset

And more endanger'd, than when Argo pass'd
Through Bosphorus betwixt the jutting rocks :
Or when Ulysses on the larbord shunn'd
Charybdis, and by th' other whirlpool steer'd. 1020
So he with difficulty and labour hard
Mov'd on, with difficulty and labour he ;
But he once past, soon after, when man fell,
Strange alteration ! Sin and Death amain
Following his track, such was the will of Heav'n, 1025
Pav'd after him a broad and beaten way
Over the dark abyss, whose boiling gulf
Tamely endur'd a bridge of wondrous length,
From Hell continued, reaching the utmost orb
Of this frail world ; by which the sp'rits perverse 1030
With easy intercourse pass to and fro,
To tempt or punish mortals, except whom
God and good angels guard by special grace.
But now at last the sacred influence
Of light appears, and from the walls of Heaven 1035
Shoots far into the bosom of dim Night
A glimmering dawn ; here Nature first begins
Her farthest verge, and Chaos to retire,
As from her utmost works a broken foe,
With tumult less and with less hostile din, 1040
That Satan with less toil, and now with ease
Wafts on the calmer wave by dubious light,
And like a weather-beaten vessel holds
Gladly the port, through shrouds and tackle torn ;
Or in the emptier waste, resembling air, 1045
Weighs his spread wings, at leisure to behold
Far off th' empyreal Heav'n, extended wide
In circuit, undetermin'd square or round,
With opal tow'rs, and battlements adorn'd
Of living saphir, once his native seat ; 1050
And fast by, hanging in a golden chain,
This pendent world, in bigness as a star
Of smallest magnitude, close by the moon.
Thither, full fraught with mischievous revenge,
Accurs'd, and in a cursed hour he hies. 1055

End of the Second Book.

E

PARADISE LOST.

B O O K III.

THE ARGUMENT.

God sitting on his throne sees Satan flying towards this world, then newly created; shews him to the Son who sat at his right hand; foretels the success of Satan in perverting mankind; clears his own justice and wisdom from all imputation, having created man free and able enough to have withstood his tempter; yet declares his purpose of grace towards him, in regard he fell not of his own malice, as did Satan, but by him seduced. The Son of God renders praises to his Father for the manifestation of his gracious purpose towards man; but God again declares, that grace cannot be extended towards man without the satisfaction of divine justice. Man hath offended the majesty of God, by aspiring to godhead; and therefore, with all his progeny, devoted to death, must die, unless some one can be found sufficient to answer for his offence, and undergo his punishment. The Son of God freely offers himself a ransom for man: the Father accepts him, ordains his incarnation, pronounces his exaltation above all names in Heaven and Earth; commands all the angels to adore him: they obey; and hymning to their harps in full quire, celebrate the Father and the Son. Mean while Satan alights upon the bare convex of this world's outermost orb; where wandering he first finds a place, since called the Limbo of Vanity; what persons and things fly up thither; thence comes to the gate of Heaven, described ascending by stars, and the waters above the firmament that flow about it: his passage thence to the orb of the sun; he finds there Uriel the regent of that orb, but first changes himself into the shape of a meaner angel; and pretending a zealous desire to behold the new creation, and man, whom God had placed here, inquires of him the place of his habitation, and is directed; alights first on mount Niphates.

PARADISE LOST.

B O O K III.

HAIL, holy Light, offspring of Heav'n first-born,
Or of th' Eternal coeternal beam
May I express thee' unblam'd? since God is light,
And never but in unapproach'd light
Dwelt from eternity, dwelt then in thee, 5
Bright effluence of bright essence increate.
Or hear'st thou rather, pure ethereal stream,
Whose fountain who shall tell? before the sun,
Before the Heav'n's thou wert, and at the voice
Of God, as with a mantle, didst invest 10
The rising world of waters dark and deep,
Won from the void and formless infinite.
Thee I revisit now with bolder wing,
Escap'd th' Stygian pool, though long detain'd
In that obscure sojourn, while in my flight 15
Through utter and through middle darkness borne,
With other notes than to th' Orphean lyre,
I sung of Chaos, and eternal Night,
Taught by th' heav'nly Muse to venture down
The dark descent, and up to re-ascend, 20
Though hard and rare: thee I revisit safe,
And feel thy sov'reign vital lamp; but thou
Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain
To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;
So thick a drop serene hath quench'd their orbs, 25
Or dim suffusion veil'd. Yet not the more
Cease I to wander, where the Muses haunt

Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,
Smit with the love of sacred song; but chief
'Thee, Sion, and the flow'ry brooks beneath, 30
'That wash thy hallow'd feet, and warbling flow,
Nightly I visit: nor sometimes forget
Those other two equall'd with me in fate,
So were I equall'd with them in renown,
Blind Thamyras and blind Mæonides; 35
And Tiresias, and Phineus, prophets old:
'Then feed on thoughts, that voluntary move
Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful bird
Sings darkling, and in shadiest covert hid
'Tunes her nocturnal note, Thus with the year 40
Seasons return, but not to me returns
Day, or the sweet approach of ev'n or morn,
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;
But cloud instead, and ever-during dark 45
Surrounds me, from the chearful ways of men
Cut off, and for the book of knowledge fair
Presented with a universal blank
Of nature's works, to me expung'd and raz'd,
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out. 50
So much the rather thou, celestial light,
Shine inward; and the mind through all her powers
Irradiate, there plant eyes, all mist from thence
Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight. 55

Now had th' Almighty Father from above,
From the pure empyrean where he sits
High thron'd above all highth, bent down his eye,
His own works, and their works at once to view:
About him all the sanctities of Heaven 60
Stood thick as stars, and from his sight receiv'd
Beatitude past utterance; on his right
The radiant image of his glory sat,
His only Son; on earth he first beheld
Our two first parents, yet the only two 65
Of mankind, in the happy garden plac'd,
Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love;
Uninterrupted joy, unrival'd love,
In blefsful solitude; he then survey'd
Hell and the gulf between, and Satan there, 70

Coasting the wall of Heav'n on this side night
In the dun air sublime; and ready now
To stoop with wearied wings and willing feet
On the bare outside of this world, that seem'd
Firm land imbosom'd, without firmament; 75
Uncertain which, in ocean or in air.

Him God beholding from his prospect high,
Wherein past, present, future he beholds,
Thus to his only Son foreseeing spake.

Only begotten Son, see'st thou what rage 80
Transports our adversary? whom no bounds
Prescrib'd, no bars of Hell, nor all the chains
Heap'd on him there, nor yet the main abyfs
Wide interrupt, can hold; so bent he seems
On desperate revenge, that shall redound 85

Upon his own rebellious head. And now,
Through all restraint broke loose, he wings his way
Not far off Heav'n, in the precincts of light,
Directly tow'ards the new-created world,
And man there plac'd, with purpose to assay 90

If him by force he can destroy, or worse,
By some false guile pervert: and shall pervert;
For man will hearken to his glozing lies,
And easily transgresses the sole command,
Sole pledge of his obedience: So will fall, 95
He and his faithless progeny: Whose fault?

Whose but his own? Ingrate, he had of me
All he could have: I made him just and right,
Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.
Such I created all th' ethereal powers 100

And sp'rits, both them who stood, and them who fail'd;
Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.
Not free, what proof could they have given sincere
Of true allegiance, constant faith or love,
Where only what they needs must do appear'd, 105
Not what they would? what praise could they receive?

What pleasure I from such obedience paid,
When will and reason (reason also' is choice)
Useless and vain, of freedom both despoil'd,
Made passive both, had serv'd necessity, 210
Not me? They therefore, as to right belong'd,
So were created, nor can justly' accuse
Their Maker, or their making, or their fate,

As if predestination over-rul'd
Their will, dispos'd by absolute decree, 115
Or high foreknowledge; they themselves decreed
Their own revolt, not I: if I foreknew,
Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,
Which had no less prov'd certain unforeknown.
So without least impulse or shadow' of fate, 120
Or aught by me immutably foreseen,
They trespass, authors to themselves in all,
Both what they judge, and what they chuse; for so
I form'd them free, and free they must remain,
Till they enthrall themselves; I else must change 125
Their nature, and revoke the high decree
Unchangeable, eternal, which ordain'd
Their freedom; they themselves ordain'd their fall.
The first sort by their own suggestion fell,
Self-tempted, self-deprav'd: man falls deceiv'd, 130
By th' other first: man therefore shall find grace,
The other none: in mercy' and justice both,
Through Heav'n and Earth, so shall my glory' excel;
But mercy, first and last, shall brightest shine.

Thus while God spake, ambrosial fragrance fill'd 135
All Heav'n, and in the blessed sp'rits elect
Sense of new joy ineffable diffus'd:
Beyond compare the Son of God was seen
Most glorious; in him all his Father shone
Substantially express'd; and in his face 140
Divine compassion visibly appear'd,
Love without end, and without measure grace;
Which uttering, thus he to his Father spoke.

O Father, gracious was that word which clos'd
Thy sov'reign sentence, that man should find grace; 145
For which both Heav'n and Earth shall high extol
Thy praises, with th' innumerable sound
Of hymns and sacred songs, wherewith thy throne
Incompass'd shall resound thee ever blest.
For should man finally be lost, should man, 150
Thy creature late so lov'd, thy youngest son,
Fall circumvented thus by fraud, though join'd
With his own folly? that be from thee far,
That far be from thee, Father, who art judge
Of all things made, and judgest only right. 155
Or shall the adversary thus obtain

His end, and frustrate thine? shall he fulfil
His malice, and thy goodness bring to nought;
Or proud return, though to his heavier doom,
Yet with revenge accomplish'd, and to Hell 160
Draw after him the whole race of mankind,
By him corrupted? or wilt thou thyself
Abolish thy creation, and unmake,
For him, what for thy glory thou hast made?
So should thy goodness and thy greatness both 165
Be question'd and blasphem'd without defence.

To whom the great Creator thus reply'd.
O Son, in whom my soul hath chief delight,
Son of my bosom, Son who art alone
My word, my wisdom, and effectual might, 170
All hast thou spoken as my thoughts are, all
As my eternal purpose hath decreed:
Man shall not quite be lost, but sav'd who will;
Yet not of will in him, but grace in me
Freely vouchsaf'd: once more I will renew 175
His lapsed pow'rs, though forfeit and enthrall'd
By sin to foul exorbitant desires;
Upheld by me, yet once more he shall stand
On even ground against his mortal foe,
By me upheld, that he may know how frail 180
His fall'n condition is, and to me owe
All his deliv'rance, and to none but me.
Some I have chosen of peculiar grace
Elect above the rest; so is my will:
The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warn'd 185
Their sinful state, and to appease betimes
Th' incens'd Deity, while offer'd grace
Invites; for I will clear their senses dark,
What may suffice, and soften stony hearts
To pray, repent, and bring obedience due. 190
To pray'r, repentance, and obedience due,
Though but endeavor'd with sincere intent,
Mine ear shall not be slow, mine eye not shut.
And I will place within them as a guide
My umpire conscience, whom if they will hear, 195
Light after light, well us'd, they shall attain,
And to the end persisting, safe arrive.
This my long sufferance, and my day of grace,
They who neglect and scorn, shall never taste;

But hard be harden'd, blind be blinded more, 200
That they may stumble on, and deeper fall;
And none but such from mercy I exclude.
But yet all is not done; man disobeying,
Disloyal breaks his fealty, and sins
Against the high supremacy of Heaven, 205
Affecting godhead, and so losing all,
To expiate his treason hath nought left,
But to destruction sacred and devote,
He, with his whole posterity, must die;
Die he or Justice must; unless for him 210
Some other able, and as willing, pay
The rigid satisfaction, death for death.
Say, heav'nly pow'rs, where shall we find such love?
Which of ye will be mortal, to redeem
Man's mortal crime, and just th' unjust to save? 215
Dwells in all Heaven charity so dear?

He ask'd, but all the heav'nly quire stood mute,
And silence was in Heav'n: on man's behalf
Patron or intercessor none appear'd,
Much less that durst upon his own head draw 220
The deadly forfeiture, and ransome set.
And now without redemption all mankind
Must have been lost, adjudg'd to death and Hell
By doom severe, had not the Son of God,
In whom the fulness dwells of love divine, 225
His dearest mediation thus renew'd.

Father, thy word is past, man shall find grace;
And shall grace not find means, that finds her way,
The speediest of thy winged messengers,
To visit all thy creatures, and to all 230
Comes unprevented, unimplor'd, unsought?
Happy for man, so coming: he her aid
Can never seek, once dead in sins and lost;
Atonement for himself, or offering meet,
Indebted and undone, hath none to bring: 235
Behold me then; me for him, life for life
I offer; on me let thine anger fall;
Account me man; I for his sake will leave
Thy bosom, and this glory next to thee
Freely put off, and for him lastly die 240
Well pleas'd; on me let Death wreck all his rage;
Under his gloomy pow'r I shall not long

Lie vanquish'd; thou hast given me to possess
Life in myself for ever; by thee I live,
Though now to Death I yield, and am his due 245
All that of me can die; yet that debt paid,
Thou wilt not leave me in the loathsome grave
His prey, nor suffer my unspotted soul
For ever with corruption there to dwell;
But I shall rise victorious, and subdue 250
My vanquisher, spoil'd of his vaunted spoil,
Death his death's wound shall then receive, and stoop
Inglorious, of his mortal sting disarm'd.
I through the ample air in triumph high
Shall lead Hell captive, maugre Hell, and show 255
The pow'rs of darkness bound. Thou at the sight
Pleas'd, out of Heav'n shalt look down, and smile,
While by thee rais'd I ruin all my foes,
Death last, and with his carcase glut the grave:
Then with the multitude of my redeem'd 260
Shall enter Heav'n, long absent, and return,
Father, to see thy face, wherein no cloud
Of anger shall remain, but peace assur'd
And reconcilment; wrath shall be no more
Thenceforth, but in thy presence joy entire. 269

His words here ended, but his meek aspect
Silent yet spake, and breath'd immortal love
To mortal men, above which only shone
Filial obedience: as a sacrifice
Glad to be offer'd, he attends the will 170
Of his great Father. Admiration seiz'd
All Heav'n, what this might mean, and whither tend
Wond'ring; but soon th' Almighty thus reply'd.

O thou in Heav'n and Earth the only peace
Found out for mankind under wrath! O thou 275
My sole complacence! well thou know'st how dear
To me are all my works, nor man the least,
Though last created; that for him I spare
Thee from my bosom and right hand, to save,
By losing thee a while, the whole race lost. 280
Thou therefore, whom thou only canst redeem,
Their nature also to thy nature join;
And be thyself man among men on earth,
Made flesh, when time shall be, of virgin seed,
By wond'rous birth: be thou in Adam's room 285

The head of all mankind, though Adam's son.
 As in him perish all men, so in thee,
 As from a second root, shall be restor'd
 As many as are restor'd, without thee none.
 His crime makes guilty all his sons; thy merit 290
 Imputed shall absolve them who renounce
 Their own both righteous and unrighteous deeds,
 And live in thee transplanted, and from thee
 Receive new life. So man, as is most just,
 Shall satisfy for man, be judg'd, and die, 295
 And dying rise, and rising with him raise
 His brethren, ransom'd with his own dear life.
 So heav'nly love shall outdo hellish hate,
 Giving to death, and dying to redeem,
 So dearly to redeem what hellish hate 300
 So easily destroy'd, and still destroys
 In those who, when they may, accept not grace.
 Nor shalt thou, by descending to assume
 Man's nature, lessen or degrade thine own.
 Because thou hast, though thron'd in highest bliss, 305
 Equal to God, and equally enjoying
 God-like fruition, quitted all to save
 A world from utter loss, and hast been found
 By merit more than birthright Son of God,
 Found worthiest to be so by being good, 310
 Far more than great or high; because in thee
 Love hath abounded more than glory' abounds,
 Therefore thy humiliation shall exalt
 With thee thy manhood also to this throne;
 Here shalt thou sit incarnate, here shalt reign 315
 Both God and man, Son both of God and man,
 Anointed universal king; all power
 I give thee; reign for ever, and assume
 Thy merits; under thee, as head supreme,
 Thrones, principedoms, pow'rs, dominions I reduce: 320
 All knees to thee shall bow, of them that bide
 In Heav'n, or Earth, or under Earth in Hell.
 When thou attended gloriously from Heaven
 Shalt in the sky appear, and from thee send
 The summoning arch-angels to proclame 325
 Thy dread tribunal; forthwith from all winds
 The living, and forthwith the cited dead
 Of all past ages, to the general doom

Shall hasten; such a peal shall rouse their sleep.
Then all thy saints assembled, thou shalt judge 330
Bad men and angels; they arraign'd shall sink
Beneath thy sentence; Hell, her numbers full,
Thenceforth shall be for ever shut. Mean while
The world shall burn, and from her ashes spring
New Heav'n and earth, wherein the just shall dwell, 335
And after all their tribulations long,
See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,
With joy and love triumphing, and fair truth.
Then thou thy regal scepter shalt lay by;
For regal scepter then no more shall need, 340
God shall be all in all. But all ye gods,
Adore him, who to compass all this dies;
Adore the Son, and honour him as me.

No sooner had th' Almighty ceas'd, but all
The multitude of angels, with a shout 345
Loud as from numbers without number, sweet
As from blest voices, uttering joy, Heav'n rung
With jubilee, and loud hosanna's fill'd
Th' eternal regions: lowly reverent
Tow'ards either throne they bow, and to the ground
With solemn adoration down they cast 351
Their crowns, inwove with amarant and gold;
Immortal amarant, a flow'r which once
In Paradise, fast by the tree of life,
Began to bloom; but soon, for man's offence, 355
To Heav'n remov'd, where first it grew, there grows,
And flow'rs aloft shading the fount of life,
And where the river of bliss through midst of Heav'n
Rolls o'er Elysian flow'rs her amber stream;
With these, that never fade, the sp'rits elect 360
Bind their resplendent locks, inwreath'd with beams;
Now in loose garlands thick thrown off, the bright
Pavement, that like a sea of jasper shone,
Impurpled with celestial roses smil'd.
Then crown'd again, their golden harps they took, 365
Harps ever tun'd, that glittering by their side
Like quivers hung, and with preamble sweet
Of charming symphony they introduce
Their sacred song, and waken raptures high;
No voice exempt; no voice but well could join 370
Melodious part; such concord is in Heaven.

Thee, Father, first they sung Omnipotent,
Immutable, Immortal, Infinite,
Eternal King; thee Author of all being,
Fountain of light, thyself invisible 375
Amidst the glorious brightness where thou sitst
Thron'd inaccessible, but when thou shad'st
The full blaze of thy beams, and through a cloud
Drawn round about thee like a radiant shrine,
Dark with excessive bright thy skirts appear, 380
Yet dazzle Heav'n, that brightest seraphim
Approach not, but with both wings veil their eyes.
Thee next they sang, of all creation first,
Begotten Son, Divine Similitude,
In whose conspicuous count'nance, without cloud 385
Made visible, th' almighty Father shines,
Whom else no creature can behold; on thee
Impress'd th' effulgence of his glory abides;
Transfus'd on thee his ample spirit rests.
He Heav'n of Heav'ns and all the pow'rs therein 390
By thee created; and by thee threw down
Th' aspiring dominations: thou that day
Thy Father's dreadful thunder didst not spare,
Nor stop thy flaming chariot-wheels, that shook
Heav'n's everlasting frame, while o'er the necks 395
Thou drov'st of warring angels disarray'd.
Back from pursuit thy pow'rs with loud acclaim
Thee only extoll'd, Son of thy Father's might,
To execute fierce vengeance on his foes,
Not so on man: him through their malice fall'n, 400
Father of mercy and grace, thou didst not doom
So strictly, but much more to pity incline:
No sooner did thy dear and only Son
Perceive thee purpos'd not to doom frail man
So strictly, but much more to pity inclin'd: 405
He to appease thy wrath, and end the strife
Of mercy and justice in thy face discern'd,
Regardless of the bliss wherein he sat
Second to thee, offer'd himself to die
For man's offence. O unexampled love, 410
Love no where to be found less than divine!
Hail Son of God, Saviour of men, thy name
Shall be the copious matter of my song
Henceforth, and never shall my harp thy praise

Forget, nor from thy Father's praise disjoin. 415
Thus they in Heav'n, above the starry sphere,
Their happy hours in joy and hymning spent.
Mean while upon the firm opacous globe
Of this round world, whose first convex divides
The luminous inferior orbs, inclos'd 420
From Chaos and th' inroad of darkness old,
Satan alighted walks. A globe far off
It seem'd; now seems a boundless continent
Dark, waste, and wild, under the frown of Night
Starless expos'd, and ever threat'ning storms 425
Of Chaos blust'ring round, inclement sky;
Save on that side which from the wall of Heaven,
Though distant far, some small reflection gains
Of glimmering air less vex'd with tempest loud:
Here walk'd the fiend at large in spacious field. 430
As when a vultur on Imaus bred,
Whose snowy ridge the roving Tartar bounds,
Dislodging from a region scarce of prey,
To gorge the flesh of lambs or yeanling kids,
On hills where flocks are fed, flies tow'ard the springs
Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams; 436
But in his way lights on the barren plains
Of Sericana, where Chineses drive
With sails and wind their cary waggons light:
So on this windy sea of land, the fiend 440
Walk'd up and down alone, bent on his prey;
Alone, for other creatures in this place,
Living or lifeless, to be found was none;
None yet, but store hereafter from the earth
Up hither like aerial vapors flew 454
Of all things transitory and vain, when sin
With vanity had fill'd the works of men;
Both all things vain, and all who in vain things
Built their fond hopes of glory or lasting fame,
Or happiness in this or th' other life; 450
All who have their reward on earth, the fruits
Of painful superstition and blind zeal,
Nought seeking but the praise of men, here find
Fit retribution, empty as their deeds;
All th' unaccomplish'd works of Nature's hand, 455
Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mix'd,
Dissolv'd on earth, fleet hither, and in vain,

Till final dissolution, wander here,
Not in the neighb'ring moon, as some have dream'd ;
Those argent fields more likely habitants, 460
Translated saints, or middle spirits, hold
Betwixt th' angelical and human kind.
Hither of ill-join'd sons and daughters born
First from the antient world those giants came
With many a vain exploit, though then renown'd : 465
The builders next of Babel on the plain
Of Sennaar, and still with vain design
New Babels, had they wherewithal, would build :
Others came single ; he who to be deem'd
A god, leap'd fondly into Ætna flames, 470
Empedocles ; and he who to enjoy
Plato's Elysium, leap'd into the sea,
Cleombrotus ; and many more too long,
Embryo's and idiots, eremites and friers
White, black, and gray, with all their trumpery. 475
Here pilgrims roam, that stray'd so far to seek
In Golgotha him dead, who lives in Heaven ;
And they who to be sure of Paradise
Dying put on the weeds of Dominic,
Or in Franciscan think to pass disguis'd ; 480
They pass the planets sev'n, and pass the fix'd,
And that crySTALLIN sphere whose balance weighs
The trepidation talk'd, and that first mov'd ;
And now Saint Peter at Heav'n's wicket seems
To wait them with his keys ; and now at foot 485
Of Heav'n's ascent they lift their feet, when lo
A violent cross wind from either coast
Blows them transverse ten thousand leagues awry
Into the devious air ; then might ye see
Cowls, hoods, and habits, with their wearers tost 490
And flutter'd into rags ; then reliques, beads,
Indulgences, dispenses, pardons, bulls,
The sport of winds ; all these upwhirl'd aloft
Fly o'er the backside of the world far off
Into a limbo large and broad, since call'd 495
The Paradise of Fools, to few unknown
Long after, now unpeopled, and untrod.
All this dark globe the fiend found as he pass'd ;
And long he wander'd, till at last a gleam
Of dawning light turn'd thitherward in haste 500

His travell'd steps : far distant he descries,
Ascending by degrees magnificent
Up to the wall of Heav'n, a structure high ;
At top whereof, but far more rich, appear'd
The work as of a kingly palace-gate, 505
With frontispiece of diamond and gold
Embellish'd ; thick with sparkling orient gems
The portal shone, inimitable on earth
By model, or by shading pencil drawn.
The stairs were such as whereon Jacob saw 510
Angels ascending and descending, bands
Of guardians bright, when he from Esau fled
To Padan-Aram, in the field of Luz
Dreaming by night under the open sky,
And waking cry'd, This is the gate of Heav'n. 515
Each stair mysteriously was meant, nor stood
There always, but drawn up to Heav'n sometimes
Viewless ; and underneath a bright sea flow'd
Of jasper or of liquid pearl, whereon
Who after came from earth, sailing arriv'd, 520
Wafted by angels, or flew o'er the lake
Rapt in a chariot drawn by fiery steeds.
The stairs were then let down, whether to dare
The fiend by easy ascent, or aggravate
His sad exclusion from the doors of bliss : 525
Direct against which open'd from beneath,
Just o'er the blissful seat of Paradise,
A passage down to th' earth, a passage wide,
Wider by far than that of after-times
Over mount Sion, and though that were large, 530
Over the promis'd land to God so dear,
By which, to visit oft those happy tribes,
On high behests his angels to and fro
Pass'd frequent, and his eye with choice regard
From Paneas, the fount of Jordan's flood, 535
To Beerfaba, where the holy land
Borders on Egypt and th' Arabian shore ;
So wide the opening seem'd, where bounds were set
To darkness, such as bound the ocean wave.
Satan from hence, now on the lower stair, 540
That scal'd by steps of gold to Heaven-gate,
Looks down with wonder at the sudden view
Of all this world at once. As when a scout

Through dark and desert ways with peril gone
All night, at last by break of chearful dawn 545
Obtains the brow of some high climbing hill,
Which to his eye discovers unaware
The goodly prospect of some foreign land
First seen, or some renown'd metropolis,
With glist'ring spires, and pinacles adorn'd, 550
Which now the rising sun gilds with his beams:
Such wonder seiz'd, though after Heaven seen,
The sp'rit malign, but much more envy seiz'd,
At sight of all this world beheld so fair.
Round he surveys (and well might, where he stood 555
So high above the circling canopy
Of night's extended shade) from eastern point
Of Libra to the fleecy star that bears
Andromeda far off Atlantic seas
Beyond th' horizon: then from pole to pole 560
He views in breadth; and without longer pause
Down right into the world's first region throws
His flight precipitant, and winds with ease
Through the pure marble air his oblique way
Amongst innumerable stars, that shone 565
Stars distant, but nigh hand seem'd other worlds;
Or other worlds they seem'd, or happy isles,
Like those Hesperian gardens fam'd of old,
Fortunate fields, and groves, and flow'ry vales,
Thrice happy isles; but who dwelt happy there 570
He stay'd not to enquire: above them all
The golden sun in splendor likest Heaven
Allur'd his eye: thither his course he bends
Through the calm firmament (but up or down,
By center, or eccentric, hard to tell, 575
Or longitude) where the great luminary
Aloof the vulgar constellations thick,
That from his lordly eye keep distance due,
Dispenses light from far; they as they move
Their starry dance in numbers that compute 580
Days, months and years, tow'rd his all-chearing lamp
Turn swift their various motions, or are turn'd
By his magnetic beam, that gently warms
The universe, and to each inward part
With gentle penetration, though unseen, 585
Shoots invisible virtue ev'n to the deep;

So wondrously was set his station bright.
There lands the fiend, a spot like which perhaps
Astronomer in the sun's lucent orb
Through his glaz'd optic tube yet never saw. 590
The place he found beyond expression bright,
Compar'd with aught on earth, metal or stone;
Not all parts like, but all alike inform'd
With radiant light, as glowing iron with fire;
If metal, part seem'd gold, part silver clear; 595
If stone, carbuncle most or chrysolite,
Ruby or topaz, to the twelve that shone
In Aaron's breast-plate, and a stone besides
Imagin'd rather oft than elsewhere seen;
That stone, or like to that which here below 600
Philosophers in vain so long have sought;
In vain, though by their pow'rful art they bind
Volatile Hermes, and call up unbound
In various shapes old Proteous from the sea,
Drain'd through a limbec to his native form. 605
What wonder then if fields and regions here
Breathe forth elixir pure, and rivers run
Portable gold, when with one virtuous touch
Th' arch-chemic sun, so far from us remote,
Produces, with terrestrial humour mix'd, 610
Here in the dark so many precious things,
Of colour glorious, and effect so rare?
Here matter new to gaze the Devil met
Undazzled; far and wide his eye commands:
For sight no obstacle found here, nor shade, 615
But all sun-shine, as when his beams at noon
Culminate from th' equator, as they now
Shot upward still direct, whence no way round
Shadow from body' opaque can fall: and th' air,
No where so clear, sharpen'd his visual ray 620
To objects distant far, whereby he soon
Saw within ken a glorious angel stand,
The same whom John saw also in the sun:
His back was turn'd, but not his brightness hid;
Of beaming funny rays a golden tiar 625
Circled his head, nor less his locks behind
Illustrious on his shoulders fledge with wings
Lay waving round; or some great change employ'd
He seem'd, or fix'd in cogitation deep.

Glad was th' sp'rit impure, as now in hope 630
To find who might direct his wand'ring flight
To Paradise, the happy seat of man,
His journey's end, and our beginning woe.
But first he casts to change his proper shape,
Which else might work him danger or delay : 635
And now a stripling cherub he appears,
Not of the prime, yet such as in his face
Youth smil'd celestial, and to every limb
Suitable grace diffus'd, so well he feign'd :
Under a coronet his flowing hair 640
In curls on either cheek play'd ; wings he wore
Of many a colour'd plume, sprinkled with gold,
His habit fit for speed succinct, and held
Before his decent steps a silver wand.
He drew not nigh unheard ; the angel bright, 645
Ere he drew nigh, his radiant visage turn'd,
Admonish'd by his ear, and strait was known
Th' arch-angel Uriel, one of the seven
Who in God's presence, nearest to his throne,
Stand ready at command, and are his eyes 650
That run through all the Heav'ns, or down to th' earth
Bear his swift errands, over moist and dry,
O'er sea and land : him Satan thus accosts.

Uriel, for thou of those sev'n sp'rits that stand
In sight of God's high throne, gloriously bright, 655
The first are wont his great authentic will
Interpreter through highest Heaven to bring,
Where all his sons thy embassy attend ;
And here art likeliest by supreme decree
Like honour to obtain, and as his eye, 660
To visit oft this new creation round ;
Unspeakable desire to see, and know
All these his wondrous works, but chiefly man,
His chief delight and favour, him for whom
All these his works so wondrous he ordain'd, 665
Hath brought me from the quires of cherubim
Alone thus wand'ring. Brightest seraph, tell
In which of all these shining orbs hath man
His fixed seat, or fixed seat hath none,
But all these shining orbs his choice to dwell ; 670
That I may find him, and with secret gaze
Or open admiration him behold,

On whom the great Creator hath bestow'd
Worlds, and on whom hath all these graces pour'd ;
That both in him and all things, as is meet, 675
The universal Maker we may praise ;
Who justly hath driv'n out his rebel foes
To deepest Hell, and, to repair that loss,
Created this new happy race of men
To serve him better : wise are all his ways. 680

So spake the false dissembler unperceiv'd ;
For neither man nor angel can discern
Hypocrisy, the only evil that walks
Invisible, except to God alone,
By his permissive will, through Heav'n and earth : 685
And oft, though wisdom wake, suspicion sleeps
At wisdom's gate, and to simplicity
Resigns her charge, while goodness thinks no ill
Where no ill seems : which now for once beguil'd
Uriel, though regent of the sun, and held 690
The sharpest-sighted sp'rit of all in Heav'n ;
Who to th' fraudulent impostor foul,
In his uprightness answer thus return'd.

Fair angel, thy desire, which tends to know
The works of God, thereby to glorify 695
The great Work-master, leads to no excess
That reaches blame, but rather merits praise
The more it seems excess, that led thee hither
From thy empyreal mansion thus alone,
To witness with thine eyes what some, perhaps, 700
Contented with report, hear only in Heav'n :
For wonderful indeed are all his works,
Pleasant to know, and worthiest to be all
Had in remembrance always with delight ;
But what created mind can comprehend 705
Their number, or the wisdom infinite
That brought them forth, but hid their causes deep ?
I saw when at his word the formless mass,
This world's material mold, came to a heap :
Confusion heard his voice, and wild uproar 710
Stood rul'd, stood vast infinitude confin'd ;
Till at his second bidding darkness fled,
Light shone, and order from disorder sprung :
Swift to their several quarters hasted then
The cumbrous elements, earth, flood, air, fire ; 715

And this ethereal quintessence of Heav'n
Flew upward, spirited with various forms,
That roll'd orbicular, and turn'd to stars,
Numberless, as thou seest, and how they move;
Each had his place appointed, each his course; 720
The rest in circuit walls this universe.
Look downward on that globe, whose hither side
With light from hence, though but reflected, shines;
That place is earth, the seat of man; that light
His day, which else, as th' other hemisphere, 725
Night would invade; but there the neighb'ring moon
(So call that opposite fair star) her aid
Timely interposes, and her monthly round
Still ending, still renewing, through mid Heav'n,
With borrow'd light her countenance triform 730
Hence fills, and empties, to enlighten th' earth,
And in a pale dominion checks the night.
That spot to which I point is Paradise,
Adam's abode; those lofty shades his bow'r:
Thy way thou canst not miss, me mine requires. 735
Thus said, he turn'd; and Satan bowing low,
As to superior sp'rits is wont in Heav'n,
Where honour due and reverence none neglects,
Took leave, and tow'ard the coast of earth beneath,
Down from th' ecliptic, sped with hop'd success, 740
Throws his steep flight in many an airy wheel,
Nor stay'd, till on Niphates top he lights.

End of the Third Book.

Satan now in prospect of Eden, and with the plan
where he must now attempt the bold enterprise
of seducing the angels, and the human race
into sin, and thus to bring about the ruin of
mankind, he now begins to consider what
means he should use to accomplish his purpose;
and in the first place, he looks at the
state of the world, as he has just seen it
from his high station, and he is struck with
astonishment at the beauty and fertility of the
land, and the happiness of the inhabitants.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK IV.

THE ARGUMENT.

Satan now in prospect of Eden, and nigh the place where he must now attempt the bold enterprise which he undertook alone against God and man; falls into many doubts with himself, and many passions, fear, envy, and despair; but at length confirms himself in evil, journeys on to Paradise, whose outward prospect and situation is described; overleaps the bounds, sits in the shape of a cormorant on the tree of life, as highest in the garden, to look about him. The garden described; Satan's first sight of Adam and Eve; his wonder at their excellent form and happy state; but with resolution to work their fall: overhears their discourse, thence gathers that the tree of knowledge was forbidden them to eat of, under penalty of death; and thereon intends to found his temptation, by seducing them to transgress: then leaves them a while, to know further of their state by some other means. Mean while Uriel descending on a sun-beam, warns Gabriel, who had in charge the gate of Paradise, that some evil spirit had escaped the deep, and passed at noon by his sphere in the shape of a good angel down to Paradise, discovered after by his furious gestures in the mount. Gabriel promises to find him ere morning. Night coming on, Adam and Eve discourse of going to their rest: their bower described; their evening worship. Gabriel, drawing forth his bands of night-watch to walk the round of Paradise, appoints two strong angels to Adam's bower, lest the evil spirit should be there doing some harm to Adam or Eve sleeping; there they find him at the ear of Eve, tempting her in a dream, and bring him, though unwilling, to Gabriel; by whom questioned, he scornfully answers; prepares resistance, but, hindered by a sign from Heaven, flies out of Paradise.

PARADISE LOST.

B O O K IV.

O FOR that warning voice, which he who saw
Th' Apocalyps heard cry in Heav'n aloud,
Then when the Dragon, put to second rout,
Came furious down to be reveng'd on men,
“Woe to th' inhabitants on earth!” that now, 5
While time was, our first parents had been warn'd
The coming of their secret foe, and 'scap'd,
Haply so 'scap'd his mortal snare: for now
Satan, now first inflam'd with rage, came down,
The tempter ere th' accuser of mankind, 10
To wreck on innocent frail man his loss
Of that first battle, and his flight to Hell:
Yet not rejoicing in his speed, though bold
Far off and fearless, nor with cause to boast,
Begins his dire attempt, which nigh the birth 15
Now rolling boils in his tumultuous breast,
And like a devilish engine back recoils
Upon himself; horror and doubt distract
His troubled thoughts, and from the bottom stir
The Hell within him; for within him Hell 20
He brings, and round about him; nor from Hell
One step, no more than from himself, can fly
By change of place: now conscience wakes despair
That slumber'd, wakes the bitter memory
Of what he was, what is, and what must be 25
Worse; of worse deeds worse sufferings must ensue.
Sometimes towards Eden, which now in his view

Lay pleasant, his griev'd look he fixes sad ;
Sometimes toward Heav'n and the full-blazing sun,
Which now sat high in his meridian tower : 30
Then much revolving, thus in sighs began.

O thou that with surpassing glory crown'd,
Look'st from thy sole dominion like the god
Of this new world ; at whose sight all the stars
Hide their diminish'd heads ; to thee I call, 35
But with no friendly voice, and add thy name,
O Sun, to tell thee how I hate thy beams,
That bring to my remembrance from what state
I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere ;
Till pride, and worse ambition, threw me down, 40
Warring in Heav'n against Heav'n's matchless King :
Ah wherefore ! he deserv'd no such return
From me, whom he created what I was
In that bright eminence, and with his good
Upbraided none ; nor was his service hard. 45
What could be less than to afford him praise,
The easiest recompense, and pay him thanks,
How due ! yet all his good prov'd ill in me,
And wrought but malice ; lifted up so high
I disdain'd subjection, and thought one step higher 50
Would set me high'st, and in a moment quit
The debt immense of endless gratitude,
So burdensome still paying, still to owe,
Forgetful what from him I still receiv'd ;
And understood not that a grateful mind 55
By owing owes not, but still pays, at once
Indebted and discharg'd ; what burden then ?
O had his pow'rful destiny ordain'd
Me some inferior angel, I had stood 60
Then happy ; no unbounded hope had rais'd
Ambition. Yet why not ? some other power
As great might have aspir'd, and me, though mean,
Drawn to his part ; but other pow'rs as great
Fell not, but stand unshaken, from within 65
Or from without, to all temptations arm'd.
Hadst thou the same free will and pow'r to stand ?
Thou hadst : whom hast thou then or what to accuse,
But Heav'n's free love dealt equally to all ?
Be then his love accurs'd, since love or hate,
To me alike, it deals eternal woe. 70

Nay curs'd be thou; since against his thy will
Chose freely what it now so justly rues.
Me miserable! which way shall I fly
Infinite wrath, and infinite despair?
Which way I fly is Hell; myself am Hell; 75
And in the lowest deep a lower deep
Still threat'ning to devour me opens wide,
To which the Hell I suffer seems a Heaven.
O then at last relent: is there no place
Left for repentance, none for pardon left? 80
None left but by submission; and that word
Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame
Among th' sp'rits beneath, whom I seduc'd
With other promises and other vaunts
Than to submit, boasting I could subdue 85
Th' Omnipotent. Ay me, they little know
How dearly I abide that boast so vain,
Under what torments inwardly I groan,
While they adore me on the throne of Hell;
With diadem and scepter high advanc'd, 90
The lower still I fall, only supreme
In misery; such joy ambition finds.
But say I could repent, and could obtain
By act of grace my former state; how soon
Would highth recal high thoughts, how soon unsay 95
What feign'd submission swore; ease would recant
Vows made in pain, as violent and void.
For never can true reconciliation grow
Where wounds of deadly hate have pierc'd so deep:
Which would but lead me to a worse relapse 100
And heavier fall: so should I purchase dear
Short intermission bought with double smart.
This knows my punisher; therefore as far
From granting he, as I from begging peace:
All hope excluded thus, behold instead 105
Of us out-cast, exil'd, his new delight,
Mankind created, and for him this world.
So farewell hope, and with hope farewell fear,
Farewell remorse: all good to me is lost;
Evil be thou my good; by thee at least 110
Divided empire with Heav'n's King I hold,
By thee, and more than half perhaps will reign;
As man ere long, and this new world shall know.

Thus while he spake, each passion dimm'd his face
Thrice chang'd with pale, ire, envy, and despair; 115
Which marr'd his borrow'd visage, and betray'd
Him counterfeit, if any eye beheld.
For heav'nly minds from such distempers foul
Are ever clear. Whereof he soon aware,
Each perturbation smooth'd with outward calm, 120
Artificer of fraud; and was the first
That practis'd falsehood under faintly show,
Deep malice to conceal, couch'd with revenge:
Yet not enough had practis'd to deceive
Uriel once warn'd, whose eye pursu'd him down 125
The way he went, and on th' Assyrian mount
Saw him disfigur'd, more than could befall
Spirit of happy sort: his gestures fierce
He mark'd, and mad demeanour, then alone,
As he suppos'd, all unobserv'd, unseen. 130
So on he fares, and to the border comes
Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,
Now nearer, crowns with her inclosure green,
As with a rural mound, the champain head
Of a steep wilderness; whose hairy sides 135
With thicket overgrown, grotesque and wild,
Access deny'd; and over head up grew,
Insuperable highth of loftiest shade,
Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,
A sylvan scene; and as the ranks ascend 140
Shade above shade, a woody theatre
Of stateliest view. Yet higher than their tops
The verd'rous wall of Paradise up sprung:
Which to our general sight gave prospect large
Into his nether empire neighb'ring round. 145
And higher than that wall a circling row
Of goodliest trees, loaden with fairest fruit,
Blossoms and fruits at once of golden hue,
Appear'd, with gay enamel'd colours mix'd:
On which the sun more glad impress'd his beams 150
Than in fair evening cloud, or humid bow,
When God hath showr'd the earth; so lovely seem'd
That landkip: and of pure now purer air
Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires
Vernal delight and joy, able to drive 155
All sadness but despair: now gentle gales

Fanning their odoriferous wings dispense
Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
Those balmy spoils. As when to them who sail
Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past 160
Mozambic, off at sea north-east winds blow
Sabeian odours from the spicy shore
Of Araby the blest'd ; with such delay
Well pleas'd they slack their course, and many a league
Chear'd with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles : 165
So entertain'd those odorous sweets the fiend
Who came their bane, though with them better pleas'd
Than Asmodeus with the fishy fume
That drove him, though enamour'd, from the spouse
Of Tobit's son, and with a vengeance sent 170
From Media post to Egypt, there fast bound.
Now to th' ascent of that steep savage hill
Satan had journey'd on, pensive and slow ;
But further way found none, so thick intwin'd,
As one continued brake, the undergrowth 175
Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplex'd
All path of man or beast that pass'd that way.
One gate there only was, and that look'd east
On th' other side : which when th' arch-felon saw,
Due entrance he disdain'd, and, in contempt, 180
At one slight bound high over leap'd all bound
Of hill or highest wall, and sheer within
Lights on his feet. As when a prowling wolf,
Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,
Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve 185
In hurdled cotes amid the field secure,
Leaps o'er the fence with ease into the fold :
Or as a thief, bent to unhoard the cash
Of some rich burgher, whose substantial doors,
Cross-barr'd and bolted fast, fear no assault, 190
In at the window climbs, or o'er the tiles ;
So clomb this first grand thief into God's fold ;
So since into his church lewd hirelings climb.
Thence up he flew, and on the tree of life,
The middle tree, and highest there that grew, 195
Sat like a cormorant ; yet not true life
Thereby regain'd, but sat devising death
To them who liv'd ; nor on the virtue thought
Of that life-giving plant, but only us'd

For prospect, what well us'd had been the pledge 200
Of immortality. So little knows
Any, but God alone, to value right
The good before him, but perverts best things
To worst abuse, or to their meanest use.
Beneath him with new wonder now he views, 205
To all delight of human sense expos'd,
In narrow room, Nature's whole wealth, yea more,
A Heav'n on earth : for blissful Paradise
Of God the garden was, by him in th' east
Of Eden planted ; Eden stretch'd her line 210
From Auran eastward to the royal towers
Of great Seleucia, built by Grecian kings,
Or where the sons of Eden long before
Dwelt in Telassar : in this pleasant soil
His far more pleasant garden God ordain'd ; 215
Out of the fertile ground he caus'd to grow
All trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste ;
And all amid them stood the tree of life,
High eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit
Of vegetable gold ; and next to life, 220
Our death, the tree of knowledge, grew fast by,
Knowledge of good bought dear by knowing ill.
Southward through Eden went a river large,
Nor chang'd his course, but through the shaggy hill
Pass'd underneath ingulf'd ; for God had thrown 225
That mountain as his garden-mold high rais'd
Upon the rapid current, which through veins
Of porous earth with kindly thirst up drawn,
Rose a fresh fountain, and with many a rill
Water'd the garden ; thence united fell 230
Down the steep glade, and met the nether flood,
Which from his darksome passage now appears ;
And now divided into four main streams,
Runs diverse, wand'ring many a famous realm
And country, whereof here needs no account ; 235
But rather to tell how, if art could tell,
How from that saphir fount the crisped brooks,
Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,
With mazy error under pendent shades
Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed 240
Flow'rs worthy of Paradise, which not nice art
In beds and curious knots, but Nature boon

Pour'd forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain,
Both where the morning sun first warmly smote
The open field, and where the unpierc'd shade 245
Imbrown'd the noontide-bow'rs : Thus was this place
A happy rural seat of various view ;
Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums and balm ;
Others whose fruit, burnish'd with golden rind,
Hung amiable, Hesperian fables true, 250
If true, here only, and of delicious taste :
Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks
Grazing the tender herb, were interpos'd,
Or palmy hillock ; or the flow'ry lap
Of some irriguous valley spread her store, 255
Flow'rs of all hue, and without thorn the rose :
Another side, umbrageous grots and caves
Of cool recess, o'er which the mantling vine
Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps
Luxuriant : mean while murmuring waters fall 260
Down the slope hills, dispers'd, or in a lake,
That to the fringed bank with myrtle crown'd
Her crystal mirror holds, unite their streams.
The birds their quire apply ; airs, vernal airs,
Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune 265
The trembling leaves, while universal Pan,
Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance,
Led on th' eternal spring. Not that fair field
Of Enna, where Proserpin gathering flowers,
Herself a fairer flow'r, by gloomy Dis 270
Was gather'd, which cost Ceres all that pain
To seek her through the world ; nor that sweet grove
Of Daphne by Orontes, and th' inspir'd
Castalian spring, might with this Paradise
Of Eden strive ; nor that Nyseian isle 275
Girt with the river Triton, where old Cham,
Whom Gentiles Ammon call, and Lybian Jove,
Hid Amalthea, and her florid son
Young Bacchus, from his stepdame Rhea's eye ;
Nor where Abassin kings their issue guard, 280
Mount Amara, though this by some suppos'd
True Paradise under the Ethiop line
By Nilus' head, inclos'd with shining rock,
A whole day's journey high, but wide remote
From this Assyrian garden, where the fiend 285

Saw undelighted all delight, all kind
Of living creatures, new to sight, and strange.
Two of far nobler shape, erect and tall,
Godlike erect, with native honour clad
In naked majesty, seem'd lords of all, 290
And worthy seem'd; for in their looks divine
The image of their glorious Maker shone,
Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure,
(Severe, but in true filial freedom plac'd)
Whence true authority in men; though both 295
Not equal, as their sex not equal seem'd;
For contemplation he, and valour form'd;
For softness she, and sweet attractive grace;
He for God only, she for God in him.
His fair large front and eye sublime declar'd 300
Absolute rule; and hyacinthin locks
Round from his parted forelock manly hung
Clust'ring, but not beneath his shoulders broad:
She, as a veil, down to the slender waste
Her unadorned golden tresses wore 305
Dishevel'd, but in wanton ringlets wav'd,
As the vine curls her tendrils, which imply'd
Subjection, but requir'd with gentle sway,
And by her yielded, by him best receiv'd,
Yielded with coy submission, modest pride, 310
And sweet reluctant amorous delay.
Nor those mysterious parts were then conceal'd;
Then was not guilty shame, dishonest shame
Of nature's works, honour dishonourable,
Sin-bred, how have you troubled all mankind 315
With shows instead, mere shows of seeming pure,
And banish'd from man's life his happiest life,
Simplicity and spotless innocence!
So pass'd they naked on, nor shunn'd the sight
Of God or angel; for they thought no ill: 320
So hand in hand they pass'd, the loveliest pair
That ever since in love's embraces met;
Adam the goodliest man of men since born
His sons, the fairest of her daughters Eve.
Under a tuft of shade that on a green 325
Stood whisp'ring soft, by a fresh fountain side
They sat them down; and after no more toil
Of their sweet gard'ning labour than suffic'd

To recommend cool zephyr, and made ease
More easy, wholesome thirst and appetite 330
More grateful, to their supper-fruits they fell,
Nectarian fruits, which the compliant boughs
Yielded them, side-long as they sat reclin'd
On the soft downy bank damask'd with flowers:
The favoury pulp they chew, and in the rind 335
Still as they thirsted, scoop the brimming stream;
Nor gentle purpose, nor endearing smiles
Wanted, nor youthful dalliance as befits
Fair couple, link'd in happy nuptial league,
Alone as they. About them frisking play'd 340
All beasts of th' earth, since wild, and of all chase
In wood or wilderness, forest or den;
Sporting the lion ramp'd, and in his paw
Dandled the kid; bears, tygers, ounces, pards
Gambol'd before them; th' unwieldy elephant, 345
To make them mirth, us'd all his might, and wreath'd
His lithe proboscis; close the serpent fly
Insinuating, wove with Gordian twine
His breaded train, and of his fatal guile
Gave proof unheeded; others on the grass 350
Couch'd, and now fill'd with pasture gazing fat,
Or bedward ruminating; for the sun
Declin'd was hasting now with prone career
To th' ocean isles, and in th' ascending scale
Of Heav'n the stars that usher evening rose: 355
When Satan still in gaze, as first he stood,
Scarce thus at length fail'd speech recover'd sad.
O Hell! what do mine eyes with grief behold!
Into our room of bliss thus high advanc'd
Creatures of other mold, earth-born perhaps, 360
Nor spirits, yet to heav'nly spirits bright
Little inferior; whom my thoughts pursue
With wonder, and could love, so lively shines
In them divine resemblance, and such grace
The hand that form'd them on their shape hath pour'd.
Ah gentle pair! ye little think how nigh 366
Your change approaches, when all these delights
Will vanish, and deliver ye to woe,
More woe, the more your taste is now of joy;
Happy, but for so happy ill secur'd 370
Long to continue, and this high seat your Heav'n

Ill fenc'd for Heav'n to keep out such a foe
As now is enter'd; yet no purpos'd foe
To you, whom I could pity thus forlorn,
Though I unpitied: league with you I seek, 375
And mutual amity so strait, so close,
That I with you must dwell, or you with me
Henceforth: my dwelling haply may not please,
Like this fair Paradise, your sense; yet such
Accept your Maker's work; he gave it me, 380
Which I as freely give; Hell shall unfold,
To entertain you two, her widest gates,
And send forth all her kings; there will be room,
Not like these narrow limits, to receive
Your numerous offspring; if no better place, 385
Thank him who puts me loath to this revenge
On you who wrong'd me not, for him who wrong'd.
And should I at your harmless innocence
Melt, as I do, yet public reason just,
Honour and empire with revenge enlarg'd, 390
By conqu'ring this new world, compels me now
To do what else, though damn'd, I should abhor.

So spake the fiend, and with necessity,
The tyrant's plea, excus'd his devilish deeds.
Then from his lofty stand on that high tree 395
Down he alights among the sportful herd
Of those four-footed kinds, himself now one,
Now other, as their shape serv'd best his end,
Nearer to view his prey, and unesp'y'd
To mark what of their state he more might learn, 400
By word or action mark'd: about them round
A lion now he stalks with fiery glare;
Then as a tyger, who by chance hath spy'd
In some purlieu two gentle fawns at play,
Strait couches close, then rising changes oft 405
His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground,
Whence rushing he might surest seize them both,
Grip'd in each paw: when Adam first of men,
To first of women Eve this moving speech,
Turn'd him, all ear to hear new utterance flow. 410

Sole partner, and sole part, of all these joys,
Dearer thyself than all; needs must the power
That made us, and for us this ample world,
Be infinitely good, and of his good

As liberal and free as infinite; 415
That rais'd us from the dust, and plac'd us here
In all this happiness, who at his hand
Have nothing merited, nor can perform
Aught whereof he hath need; he who requires
From us no other service than to keep 420
This one, this easy charge, of all the trees
In Paradise that bear delicious fruit
So various, not to taste that only tree
Of knowledge, planted by the tree of life;
So near grows death to life, whate'er death is, 425
Some dreadful thing no doubt; for well thou know'st
God hath pronounc'd it death to taste that tree,
The only sign of our obedience left
Among so many signs of pow'r and rule
Conferr'd upon us, and dominion given 430
Over all other creatures that possess
Earth, air, and sea. Then let us not think hard
One easy prohibition, who enjoy
Free leave so large to all things else, and choice
Unlimited of manifold delights: 435
But let us ever praise him, and extol
His bounty, following our delightful task
To prune these growing plants, and tend these flowers;
Which were it toilsome, yet with thee were sweet.

To whom thus Eve reply'd. O thou for whom 440
And from whom I was form'd, flesh of thy flesh,
And without whom am to no end, my guide
And head, what thou hast said is just and right.
For we to him indeed all praises owe,
And daily thanks; I chiefly who enjoy 445
So far the happier lot, enjoying thee
Pre-eminent by so much odds, while thou
Like consort to thyself can'st no where find.
That day I oft remember, when from sleep
I first awak'd, and found myself repos'd 450
Under a shade on flow'rs, much wond'ring where
And what I was, whence thither brought, and how.
Not distant far from thence a murm'ring sound
Of waters issued from a cave, and spread
Into a liquid plain, then stood unmov'd 455
Pure as th' expanse of Heav'n; I thither went
With unexperienc'd thought, and laid me down

On the green bank, to look into the clear
 Smooth lake, that to me seem'd another sky.
 As I bent down to look, just opposite 460
 A shape within the wat'ry gleam appear'd,
 Bending to look on me: I started back,
 It started back; but pleas'd I soon return'd,
 Pleas'd it return'd as soon with answ'ring looks
 Of sympathy and love: there I had fix'd 465
 Mine eyes till now, and pin'd with vain desire,
 Had not a voice thus warn'd me, What thou seest,
 What there thou seest, fair creature, is thyself;
 With thee it came and goes: but follow me,
 And I will bring thee where no shadow stays 470
 Thy coming, and thy soft embraces, he
 Whose image thou art; him thou shalt enjoy
 Inseparably thine, to him shalt bear
 Multitudes like thyself, and thence be call'd
 Mother of human race. What could I do, 475
 But follow strait, invisibly thus led?
 Till I espy'd thee, fair indeed and tall,
 Under a platan; yet methought less fair,
 Less winning soft, less amiably mild
 Than that smooth wat'ry image: back I turn'd; 480
 Thou following cry'dst aloud, Return, fair Eve,
 Whom fly'st thou? whom thou fly'st, of him thou art,
 His flesh, his bone; to give the being I lent
 Out of my side to thee; nearest my heart,
 Substantial life, to have thee by my side 485
 Henceforth an individual solace dear;
 Part of my soul I seek thee, and thee claim
 My other half: with that thy gentle hand
 Seiz'd mine; I yielded, and from that time see
 How beauty is excell'd by manly grace 490
 And wisdom, which alone is truly fair.

So spake our general mother, and with eyes
 Of conjugal attraction unrepov'd,
 And meek surrender, half embracing lean'd
 On our first father; half her swelling breast 495
 Naked met his, under the flowing gold
 Of her loose tresses hid: he in delight,
 Both of her beauty and submissive charms,
 Smil'd with superior love, as Jupiter
 On Juno smiles, when he impregns the clouds. 500

That shed May flow'rs; and prefs'd her matron lip
With kisses pure. Aside the Devil turn'd
For envy; yet with jealous leer malign
Ey'd them askance, and to himself thus plain'd.

Sight hateful, sight tormenting! thus these two, 505
Imparadis'd in one another's arms,
The happier Eden, shall enjoy their fill
Of bliss on bliss; while I to Hell am thrust,
Where neither joy nor love, but fierce desire,
Among our other torments not the least, 510
Still unfulfill'd with pain of longing pines.

Yet let me not forget what I have gain'd
From their own mouths: all is not theirs it seems;
One fatal tree there stands of knowledge call'd,
Forbidden them to taste. Knowledge forbidden! 515
Suspicious, reasonless. Why should their Lord
Envy them that? can it be sin to know?
Can it be death? and do they only stand
By ignorance? is that their happy state,
The proof of their obedience and their faith? 520

O fair foundation laid whereon to build
Their ruin! Hence I will excite their minds
With more desire to know, and to reject
Envious commands, invented with design
To keep them low, whom knowledge might exalt 525
Equal with gods: aspiring to be such,
They taste, and die: what likelier to ensue?
But first with narrow search I must walk round
This garden, and no corner leave unspy'd;
A chance but chance may lead where I may meet 530
Some wand'ring sp'rit of Heav'n, by fountain side,
Or in thick shade retir'd, from him to draw
What further would be learn'd. Live while ye may,
Yet happier pair! enjoy, till I return,
Short pleasures, for long woes are to succeed. 535

So saying, his proud step he scornful turn'd,
But with sly circumspection, and began
Thro' wood, thro' waste, o'er hill, o'er dale, his roam.
Mean while in utmost longitude, where Heaven
With earth and ocean meets, the setting sun 540
Slowly descended, and with right aspect
Against the eastern gate of Paradise
Levell'd his evening rays: it was a rock

Of alabaster, pil'd up to the clouds,
 Conspicuous far, winding with one ascent 545
 Accessible from earth, one entrance high;
 The rest was craggy cliff, that overhung
 Still as it rose, impossible to climb.

Betwixt these rocky pillars Gabriel sat,
 Chief of th' angelic guards, awaiting night; 550
 About him exercis'd heroic games

Th' unarmed youth of Heav'n, but nigh at hand
 Celestial armoury, shields, helms, and spears,
 Hung high, with diamond flaming, and with gold.
 Thither came Uriel, gliding through the even 555
 On a sun-beam, swift as a shooting star

In autumn thwarts the night, when vapours fir'd
 Impress the air, and shows the mariner
 From what point of his compass to beware
 Impetuous winds: he thus began in haste. 560

Gabriel, to thee thy course by lot hath given
 Charge and strict watch, that to this happy place
 No evil thing approach or enter in.

This day at highth of noon came to my sphere
 A spirit, zealous, as he seem'd, to know 565

More of th' Almighty's works, and chifly man,
 God's latest image: I describ'd his way
 Bent on all speed, and mark'd his airy gait;

But in the mount that lies from Eden north,
 Where he first lighted, soon discern'd his looks 570

Alien from Heav'n, with passions foul obscur'd:
 Mine eye pursu'd him still, but under shade
 Lost sight of him: one of the banish'd crew,
 I fear, hath ventur'd from the deep, to raise
 New troubles; him thy care must be to find. 575

To whom the winged warrior thus return'd.
 Uriel, no wonder if thy perfect sight,
 Amid the sun's bright circle where thou sitst,

See far and wide: in at this gate none pass
 The vigilance here plac'd, but such as come 580

Well known from Heav'n; and since meridian hour
 No creature thence: if sp'rit of other sort,
 So minded, have o'erleap'd these earthy bounds

On purpose, hard thou know'st it to exclude
 Spiritual substance with corporeal bar. 585

But if within the circuit of these walks,

In whatsoever shape he lurk, of whom
Thou tell'st, by morrow dawning I shall know.

So promis'd he ; and Uriel to his charge
Return'd on that bright beam, whose point now rais'd
Bore him slope downward to the sun now fall'n 591
Beneath th' Azores ; whether the prime orb,
Incredible how swift, had thither roll'd
Diurnal, or this less volubile earth,
By shorter flight to th' east, had left him there 595
Arraying with reflected purple and gold
The clouds that on his western throne attend.

Now came still evening on, and twilight gray
Had in her sober livery all things clad ;
Silence accompanied ; for beast and bird, 600
They to their grassy couch, these to their nests
Were flunk, all but the wakeful nightingale ;
She all night long her amorous descant sung ;
Silence was pleas'd : now glow'd the firmament
With living saphirs : Hesperus, that led 605
The starry host, rode brightest, till the moon
Rising in clouded majesty, at length
Apparent queen unveil'd her peerless light,
And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw.

When Adam thus to Eve. Fair consort, th' hour 610
Of night, and all things now retir'd to rest,
Mind us of like repose, since God hath set
Labour and rest, as day and night, to men
Successive ; and the timely dew of sleep
Now falling with soft slumbrous weight inclines 615
Our eye-lids : other creatures all day long
Rove idle unemploy'd, and less need rest ;
Man hath his daily work of body or mind
Appointed, which declares his dignity,
And the regard of Heav'n on all his ways ; 620
While other animals unactive range,
And of their doings God takes no account.
To-morrow, ere fresh morning streak the east
With first approach of light, we must be risen,
And at our pleasant labour, to reform 625
Yon flow'ry arbours, yonder alleys green,
Our walk at noon, with branches overgrown,
That mock our scant manuring, and require
More hands than ours to lop their wanton growth :

Those blossoms also, and those dropping gums, 630
That lie bestrown, unsightly and unsmooth,
Ask riddance, if we mean to tread with ease:
Mean while, as Nature wills, night bids us rest.

To whom thus Eve, with perfect beauty adorn'd.
My author and disposer, what thou bid'st 635
Unargued I obey; so God ordains;
God is thy law, thou mine: to know no more
Is woman's happiest knowledge and her praise.

With thee conversing I forget all time;
All seasons and their change, all please alike. 640
Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,
With charm of earliest birds; pleasant the sun,
When first on this delightful land he spreads
His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,
Glist'ring with dew; fragrant the fertile earth 645

After soft show'rs; and sweet the coming on
Of grateful evening mild; then silent night,
With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,
And these the gems of Heav'n, her starry train:
But neither breath of morn, when she ascends 650

With charm of earliest bird; nor rising sun
On this delightful land; nor herb, fruit, flower,
Glist'ring with dew; nor fragrance after showers;
Nor grateful evening mild; nor silent night
With this her solemn bird, nor walk by moon, 655
Or glittering star-light, without thee is sweet.

But wherefore all night long shine these? for whom
This glorious sight, when sleep hath shut all eyes?

To whom our general ancestor reply'd.
Daughter of God and man, accomplish'd Eve! 660
These have their course to finish round the earth,
By morrow ev'ning, and from land to land
In order, though to nations yet unborn,
Minist'ring light prepar'd, they set and rise;
Lest total darkness should by night regain 965

Her old possession, and extinguish life
In nature and all things; which these soft fires
Not only enlighten, but with kindly heat
Of various influence foment and warm,
Temper or nourish, or in part shed down 670
Their stellar virtue on all kinds that grow
On earth, made hereby apter to receive

Perfection from the sun's more potent ray.
These then, though unbeheld in deep of night,
Shine not in vain; nor think, tho' men were none, 675
That Heav'n would want spectators, God want praise:
Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep:
All these with ceaseless praise his works behold
Both day and night: how often, from the steep 680
Of echoing hill or thicket have we heard
Celestial voices to the midnight air,
Sole, or responsive each to others note,
Singing their great Creator? oft in bands
While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk 685
With heav'nly touch of instrumental sounds
In full harmonic number join'd, their songs
Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to Heav'n.

Thus talking hand in hand alone they pass'd
On to their blissful bow'r: it was a place 690
Chos'n by the sov'reign Planter, when he fram'd
All things to man's delightful use; the roof
Of thickest covert was inwoven shade
Laurel and myrtle, and what higher grew
Of firm and fragrant leaf; on either side 695
Acanthus, and each odorous bushy shrub,
Fenc'd up the verdant wall; each beauteous flower,
Iris all hues, roses, and jessamin,
Rear'd high their flourish'd heads between, and wrought
Mosaic; underfoot the violet, 700
Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay
Broider'd the ground, more colour'd than with stone
Of costliest emblem: other creature here,
Beast, bird, insect, or worm, durst enter none;
Such was their awe of man. In shadier bower 705
More sacred and sequester'd, though but feign'd,
Pan or Sylvanus never slept, nor nymph,
Nor Faunus haunted. Here in close recess,
With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs
Espoused Eve deck'd first her nuptial bed, 710
And heav'nly quires the hymenæan sung,
What day the genial angel to our fire
Brought her, in naked beauty more adorn'd,
More lovely than Pandora, whom the gods
Endow'd with all their gifts, and O too like 715

In sad event, when to th' unwiser son
Of Japhet brought by Hermes, she ensnar'd
Mankind with her fair looks, to be aveng'd
On him who had stole Jove's authentic fire.

Thus at their shady lodge arriv'd, both stood, 720
Both turn'd, and under open sky ador'd
The God that made both sky, air, earth and Heaven,
Which they beheld, the moon's resplendent globe,
And starry pole : Thou also mad'st the night,
Maker Omnipotent, and thou the day, 725
Which we in our appointed work employ'd
Have finish'd, happy in our mutual help,
And mutal love, the crown of all our blifs
Ordain'd by thee, and this delicious place
For us too large, where thy abundance wants 730
Partakers, and uncropt falls to the ground.
But thou hast promis'd from us two a race
To fill the earth, who shall with us extol
Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,
And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep. 735

This said unanimous, and other rites
Observing none, but adoration pure
Which God likes best, into their inmost bower
Handed they went ; and eas'd the putting off
These troublesome disguises which we wear, 740
Strait side by side were laid ; nor turn'd I ween
Adam from his fair spouse, nor Eve the rites
Mysterious of connubial love refus'd :
Whatever hypocrites austere talk
Of purity, and place, and innocence, 745
Defaming as impure what God declares
Pure, and commands to some, leaves free to all.
Our Maker bids increase ; Who bids abstain
But our destroyer, foe to God and man ?
Hail wedded love, mysterious law, true source 750
Of human offspring, sole propriety
In Paradise of all things common else.
By thee adult'rous lust was driven from men
Among the bestial herds to range ; by thee
Founded in reason, loyal, just and pure, 755
Relations dear, and all the charities
Of Father, son, and brother first were known.
Far be it that I should write thee sin or blame,

Or think thee unbefitting holiest place,
Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets, 760
Whose bed is undefil'd, and chaste pronounc'd,
Present or past, as saints and patriarchs us'd.
Here love his golden shafts employs, here lights
His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings,
Reigns here and revels; not in the bought smile 765
Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unendear'd,
Casual fruition; nor in court-amours,
Mix'd dance, or wanton mask, or midnight-ball,
Or serenate, which the starv'd lover sings
To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain. 770

These, lull'd by nightingales, embracing slept,
And on their naked limbs the flow'ry roof
Show'r'd roses, with the morn repair'd. Sleep on,
Bless'd pair; and O yet happiest, if ye seek
No happier state, and know to know no more, 775

Now had night measur'd with her shadowy cone
Half way up hill this vast sublunar vault,
And from their ivory port the cherubim
Forth issuing at th' accustom'd hour, stood arm'd
To their night-watches in warlike parade; 780
When Gabriel to his next in pow'r thus spake.

Uzziel, half these draw off, and coast the south
With strictest watch; these other wheel the north;
Our circuit meets full west. As flame they part,
Half wheeling to the shield, half to the spear. 785
From these, two strong and subtle spirits he call'd
That near him stood, and gave them thus in charge.

Ithuriel and Zephon, with wing'd speed
Search through this garden, leave unsearch'd no nook;
But chiefly where these two fair creatures lodge, 790
Now laid perhaps asleep, secure of harm.
This evening from the sun's decline arriv'd
Who tells of some infernal spirit seen
Hitherward bent (who could have thought?) escap'd
The bars of Hell, on errand bad no doubt: 795
Such where ye find, seize fast, and hither bring.

So saying, on he led his radiant files,
Dazzling the moon; these to the bow'r direct
In search of whom they sought: him there they found
Squat like a toad, close at the ear of Eve, 800
Assaying by his devilish art to reach

The organs of her fancy, and with them forge
 Illusions as he list, phantasms and dreams;
 Or if, inspiring venom, he might taint
 Th' animal spirits that from pure blood arise 805
 Like gentle breaths from rivers pure, thence raise
 At least distemper'd, discontented thoughts,
 Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires,
 Blown up with high conceits ingend'ring pride.
 Him thus intent Ithuriel with his spear 810
 Touch'd lightly; for no falsehood can endure
 Touch of celestial temper, but returns
 Of force to its own likeness: up he starts
 Discover'd and surpriz'd. As when a spark
 Lights on a heap of nitrous powder, laid 815
 Fit for the tun some magazine to store
 Against a rumour'd war, the smutty grain
 With sudden blaze diffus'd, inflames the air:
 So started up in his own shape the fiend.
 Back stept these two fair angels, half amaz'd 820
 So sudden to behold the grisly king;
 Yet thus, unmov'd with fear, accost him soon.
 Which of those rebel sp'rits adjudg'd to Hell
 Com'st thou, escap'd thy prison? and transform'd,
 Why sat'st thou like an enemy in wait, 825
 Here watching at the head of these that sleep?
 Know ye not then, said Satan, fill'd with scorn,
 Know ye not me? ye knew me once no mate
 For you, there sitting where ye durst not soar:
 Not to know me argues yourselves unknown, 830
 The lowest of your throng; or if ye know,
 Why ask ye, and superfluous begin
 Your message, like to end as much in vain?
 To whom thus Zephon, answ'ring scorn with scorn.
 Think not, revolted sp'rit, thy shape the same, 835
 Or undiminish'd brightness to be known,
 As when thou stood'st in Heav'n upright and pure;
 That glory then, when thou no more wast good,
 Departed from thee; and thou resemblest now
 Thy sin and place of doom obscure and foul. 840
 But come, for thou, be sure, shalt give account
 To him who sent us, whose charge is to keep
 This place inviolable, and these from harm.
 So spake the cherub; and his grave rebuke,

Severe in youthful beauty, added grace 845

Invincible : abash'd the Devil stood,

And felt how awful goodness is, and saw

Virtue in her shape how lovely ; saw, and pin'd

His loss ; but chiefly to find here observ'd

His lustre visibly impair'd ; yet seem'd 850

Undaunted. If I must contend, said he,

Best with the best, the sender, not the sent,

Or all at once ; more glory will be won,

Or less be lost. Thy fear, said Zephon bold,

Will save us trial what the least can do 855

Single against thee wicked, and thence weak.

The fiend reply'd not, o'ercome with rage ?

But like a proud steed rein'd, went haughty on,

Champing his iron curb : to strive or fly

He held it vain ; awe from above had quell'd 860

His heart, not else dismay'd. Now drew they nigh

The western point, where those half-rounding guards

Just met, and closing stood in squadron join'd,

Awaiting next command. To whom their chief

Gabriel from the front thus call'd aloud. 865

O friends, I hear the tread of nimble feet

Hasting this way, and now by glimpse discern

Ithuriel and Zephon through the shade ;

And with them comes a third of regal port,

But faded splendor wan ; who by his gait 870

And fierce demeanour seems the prince of Hell,

Not likely to part hence without contest ;

Stand firm, for in his look defiance lours.

He scarce had ended, when those two approach'd,

And brief related whom they brought, where found, 875

How busied, in what form and posture couch'd.

To whom with stern regard thus Gabriel spake.

Why hast thou, Satan, broke the bounds prescrib'd

To thy transgressions, and disturb'd the charge

Of others, who approve not to transgress 880

By thy example, but have pow'r and right

To question thy bold entrance on this place ;

Employ'd, it seems, to violate sleep, and those

Whose dwelling God hath planted here in bliss ?

To whom thus Satan with contemptuous brow. 885

Gabriel, thou hadst in Heav'n th' esteem of wise,

And such I held thee ; but this question ask'd

Puts me in doubt. Lives there who loves his pain?
 Who would not, finding way, break loose from Hell,
 Tho' thither doom'd? Thou would'st thyself, no doubt,
 And boldly venture to whatever place 891
 Farthest from pain, where thou might'st hope to change
 Torment with ease, and soonest recompense
 Dole with delight, which in this place I fought;
 To thee no reason, who know'st only good, 895
 But evil has not try'd: and wilt object
 His will who bound us? let him surer bar
 His iron gates, if he intends our stay
 In that dark durance: thus much what was ask'd.
 The rest is true, they found me where they say; 900
 But that implies not violence or harm.

Thus he in scorn. The warlike angel mov'd,
 Disdainfully, half smiling, thus reply'd.
 O loss of one in Heav'n to judge of wise,
 Since Satan fell, whom folly overthrew, 905
 And now returns him from his prison 'scap'd,
 Gravely in doubt whether to hold them wise
 Or not, who ask what boldness brought him hither
 Unlicens'd from his bounds in Hell prescrib'd;
 So wise he judges it to fly from pain 910
 However, and to 'scape his punishment.
 So judge thou still, presumptuous, till the wrath,
 Which thou incurr'st by flying, meet thy flight
 Sev'nfold, and scourge that wisdom back to Hell,
 Which taught thee yet no better, that no pain 915
 Can equal anger infinite provok'd.
 But wherefore thou alone? wherefore with thee
 Came not all Hell broke loose? is pain to them
 Less pain, less to be fled? or thou than they
 Less hardy to endure? Courageous chief, 920
 The first in flight from pain, had'st thou alledg'd
 To thy deserted host this cause of flight,
 Thou surely hadst not come sole fugitive.

To which the fiend thus answer'd frowning stern.
 Not that I less endure, or shrink from pain, 925
 Insulting angel; well thou know'st I stood
 Thy fiercest, when in battle to thy aid
 The blasting vollied thunder made all speed,
 And seconded thy else not dreaded spear.
 But still thy words at random, as before, 930

Argue thy inexperience what behoves
From hard assaies and ill successes past
A faithful leader, not to hazard all
Through ways of danger by himself untry'd :
I therefore, I alone first undertook 935
To wing the desolate abyss, and spy
This new created world, whereof in Hell
Fame is not silent, here in hope to find
Better abode, and my afflicted powers
To settle here on earth, or in mid air ; 940
Though for possession put to try once more
What thou and thy gay legions dare against ;
Whose easier business were to serve their Lord
High up in Heav'n, with songs to hymn his throne,
And practis'd distances to cringe, not fight. 945

To whom the warrior angel soon reply'd.
To say and straight unsay, pretending first
Wise to fly pain, professing next the spy,
Argues no leader, but a liar trac'd,
Satan, and couldst thou faithful add ? O name, 950
O sacred name of faithfulness profan'd !
Faithful to whom ? to thy rebellious crew ?
Army of fiends, fit body to fit head.
Was this your discipline and faith engag'd,
Your military obedience, to dissolve 955
Allegiance to th' acknowledg'd power supreme ?
And thou, fly hypocrite, who now wouldst seem
Patron of liberty, who more than thou
Once fawn'd, and cring'd, and servily ador'd
Heav'n's awful monarch ? wherefore but in hope 960
To dispossess him, and thyself to reign ?
But mark what I arreel thee now, Avaunt ;
Fly thither whence thou fledst : if from this hour
Within these hallow'd limits thou appear,
Back to th' infernal pit I drag thee chain'd, 965
And seal thee so, as henceforth not to scorn
The facile gates of Hell too slightly barr'd.

So threaten'd he ; but Satan to no threats
Gave heed, but waxing more in rage, reply'd.

Then when I am thy captive talk of chains, 670
Proud liminary cherub, but ere then
Far heavier load thyself expect to feel
From my prevailing arm, though Heav'n's King

Ride on thy wings, and thou with thy compeers,
 Us'd to the yoke, draw'st his triumphant wheels 975
 In progress through the road of Heav'n star-pav'd.

While thus he spake, th' angelic squadron bright
 Turn'd fiery red, sharp'ning in mooned horns
 Their phalanx, and began to hem him round
 With ported spears, as thick as when a field 980
 Of Ceres ripe for harvest waving bends
 Her bearded grove of ears, which way the wind
 Sways them; the careful ploughman doubting stands,
 Lest on the threshing floor his hopeful sheaves
 Prove chaff. On th' other side, Satan alarm'd, 985
 Collecting all his might, dilated stood,
 Like Teneriff or Atlas unremov'd:

His stature reach'd the sky, and on his crest
 Sat Horror plum'd; nor wanted in his grasp
 What seem'd both spear and shield. Now dreadful deeds
 Might have ensu'd, nor only Paradise 995
 In this commotion, but the starry cope
 Of Heav'n perhaps, or all the elements
 At least had gone to wrack, disturb'd and torn
 With violence of this conflict, had not soon 995
 Th' Eternal, to prevent such horrid fray,
 Hung forth in Heaven his golden scales, yet seen
 Betwixt Aftrea' and the Scorpion sign,
 Wherein all things created first he weigh'd,
 The pendulous round earth, with balanc'd air 1000
 In counterpoise, now ponders all events,
 Battles and realms: in these he put two weights,
 The sequel each of parting and of fight;
 The latter quick up flew, and kick'd the beam;
 Which Gabriel spying, thus bespake the fiend. 1005

Satan, I know thy strength, and thou know'st mine,
 Neither our own but giv'n: what folly then
 To boast what arms can do? since thine no more
 Than Heav'n permits, nor mine, though doubled now
 To trample thee as mire: for proof look up, 1010
 And read thy lot in yon celestial sign,
 Where thou art weigh'd, and shown how light, how weak,
 If thou resist. The fiend look'd up, and knew
 His mounted scale aloft: nor more; but fled
 Murm'ring, and with him fled the shades of night. 1015

End of the Fourth Book.

THE ANNOTATED
PARADISE LOST.

B O O K V.



THE ARGUMENT.

Morning approach'd, Eve relates to Adam her troublesome dream; he likes it not, yet comforts her: they come forth to their day labours: their morning hymn at the door of their bower. God, to render man inexcusable, sends Raphael to admonish him of his obedience, of his free state, of his enemy near at hand, who he is, and why his enemy, and whatever else may avail Adam to know. Raphael comes down to Paradise; his appearance describ'd; his coming discern'd by Adam afar off sitting at the door of his bower; he goes out to meet him, brings him to his lodge, entertains him with the choicest fruits of Paradise, got together by Eve; their discourse at table: Raphael performs his message, minds Adam of his state and of his enemy; relates, at Adam's request, who that enemy is, and how he came to be so, beginning from his first revolt in Heaven, and the occasion thereof; how he drew his legions after him to the parts of the north, and there incited them to rebel with him, persuading all but only Abdiel a seraph, who in argument dissuades and opposes him; then forsakes him.

PARADISE LOST.

B O O K V.

NOW morn her rosy steps in th' eastern clime
Advancing, sow'd the earth with orient pearl,
When Adam wak'd, so custom'd, for his sleep
Was airy light from pure digestion bred,
And temp'rate vapours bland, which th' only found 5
Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora's fan,
Lightly dispers'd, and the shrill matin song
Of birds on every bough; so much the more
His wonder was to find unwaken'd Eve,
With tresses discompos'd, and glowing cheek, 10
As through unquiet rest: he, on his side
Leaning, half rais'd, with looks of cordial love
Hung over her enamour'd, and beheld
Beauty, which, whether waking or asleep,
Shot forth peculiar graces; then with voice 15
Mild, as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes,
Her hand soft touching, whisper'd thus. Awake
My fairest, my espous'd, my latest found,
Heav'n's last best gift, my ever new delight,
Awake! the morning shines, and the fresh field 20
Calls us; we lose the prime to mark how spring
Our tended plants, how blows the citron grove,
What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy reed,
How nature paints her colours, how the bee
Sits on the bloom extracting liquid sweet. 25

Such whisp'ring wak'd her, but with startled eye
On Adam; whom embracing, thus she spake.

O sole in whom my thoughts find all repose,
My glory, my perfection, glad I see
Thy face, and morn return'd; for I this night 30
(Such night till this I never pass'd) have dream'd,
If dream'd, not, as I oft am wont, of thee,
Works of day past, or morrow's next design;
But of offence and trouble, which my mind
Knew never till this irksome night: methought 35
Close at mine ear one call'd me forth to walk
With gentle voice; I thought it thine: it said,
Why sleep'st thou, Eve? now is the pleasant time,
The cool, the silent, save where silence yields
To the night-warbling bird, that now awake 40
Tunes sweetest his love-labour'd song; now reigns
Full orb'd the moon, and with more pleasing light
Shadowy sets off the face of things; in vain,
If none regard: Heav'n wakes with all his eyes;
Whom to behold but thee, Nature's desire? 45
In whose sight all things joy, with ravishment
Attracted by thy beauty still to gaze.
I rose as at thy call, but found thee not;
To find thee I directed then my walk;
And on, methought, alone I pass'd, through ways 50
That brought me on a sudden to the tree
Of interdicted knowledge: fair it seem'd,
Much fairer to my fancy than by day:
And as I wond'ring look'd, beside it stood
One shap'd and wing'd like one of those from Heav'n
By us oft seen; his dewy locks distill'd 56
Ambrosia; on that tree he also gaz'd;
And O fair plant, said he, with fruit surcharg'd,
Deigns none to ease thy load and taste thy sweet,
Nor God, nor man? is knowledge so despis'd? 60
Or envy, or what reserve forbids to taste?
Forbid who will, none shall from me with-hold
Longer thy offer'd good; why else set here?
Thus said, he paus'd not, but with ventrous arm
He pluck'd, he tasted: me damp horror chill'd 65
At such bold words, vouch'd with a deed so bold:
But he thus overjoy'd, O fruit divine,
Sweet of thyself, but much more sweet thus cropt,
Forbidden here, it seems, as only fit
For gods, yet able to make gods of men: 70

And why not gods of men, since good, the more
Communicated, more abundant grows,
The author not impair'd, but honour'd more?
Here, happy creature, fair angelic Eve,
Partake thou also; happy though thou art, 75
Happier thou may'st be, worthier can'st not be:
Taste this, and be henceforth among the gods
Thyself a goddess, not to earth confin'd,
But sometimes in the air, as we, sometimes
Ascend to Heav'n, by merit thine, and see 80
What life the gods live there, and such live thou.
So saying, he drew nigh, and to me held,
Ev'n to my mouth, of that same fruit held part
Which he had pluck'd; the pleasant savory smell
So quicken'd appetite, that I, methought, 85
Could not but taste. Forthwith up to the clouds
With him I flew, and underneath beheld
The earth outstretch'd immense, a prospect wide
And various: wond'ring at my flight and change
To this high exaltation; suddenly 90
My guide was gone, and I, methought, sunk down,
And fell asleep; but O how glad I wak'd
To find this but a dream! Thus Eve her night
Related, and thus Adam answer'd sad.

Best image of myself, and dearer half, 95
The trouble of thy thoughts this night in sleep
Affects me equally; nor can I like
This uncouth dream, of evil sprung I fear:
Yet evil whence? in thee can harbour none,
Created pure. But know, that in the soul 100
Are many lesser faculties, that serve
Reason as chief: among these fancy next
Her office holds; of all external things,
Which the five watchful senses represent
She forms imaginations, airy shapes, 105
Which reason joining or disjoining, frames
All what we affirm or what deny, and call
Our knowledge or opinion; then retires
Into her private cell, when nature rests.
Oft in her absence inimic fancy wakes 110
To imitate her; but misjoining shapes,
Wild work produces oft, and most in dreams,
Ill matching words and deeds long past or late.

Some such resemblances, methinks, I find
Of our last evening's talk, in this thy dream, 115
But with addition strange; yet be not sad.
Evil into the mind of God or man
May come and go, so un approv'd, and leave
No spot or blame behind: which gives me hope
That what in sleep thou didst abhor to dream, 120
Waking thou never wilt consent to do.

Be not dishearten'd then, nor cloud those looks,
That wont to be more chearful and serene,
Than when fair morning first smiles on the world;
And let us to our fresh employments rise 125
Among the groves, the fountains, and the flowers
That open now their choicest bosom'd smells,
Reserv'd from night, and kept for thee in store.

So chear'd he his fair spouse, and she was chear'd;
But silently a gentle tear let fall 130
From either eye, and wip'd them with her hair;
Two other precious drops that ready stood,
Each in their crystal sluice, he, ere they fell,
Kiss'd as the gracious signs of sweet remorse
And pious awe, that fear'd to have offended. 135

So all was clear'd, and to the field they haste.
But first, from under shady arborous roof
Soon as they forth were come to open sight
Of day-spring; and the sun, who scarce up risen,
With wheels yet hov'ring o'er the ocean-brim, 140
Shot parallel to the earth his dewy ray,
Discovering in wide landskip all the east
Of Paradise and Eden's happy plains,
Lowly they bow'd adoring, and began
Their orisons, each morning duly paid 145
In various stile; for neither various stile
Nor holy rapture wanted they to praise
Their Maker, in fit strains pronounc'd, or sung
Unmeditated, such prompt eloquence
Flow'd from their lips, in prose or numerous verse, 150
More tuneable than needed lute or harp
To add more sweetness; and they thus began.

These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,
Almighty, thine this universal frame,
Thus wondrous fair; thyself how wondrous then! 155
Unspeakable, who sitst above these Heavens

To us invisible, or dimly seen
In these thy lowest works ; yet these declare
Thy goddness beyond thought, and pow'r divine.
Speak ye who best can tell, ye sons of light, 160
Angels; for ye behold him, and with songs
And choral fymphonies, day without night,
Circle his throne rejoicing; ye in Heav'n,
On Earth join all ye creatures to extol
Him first, him last, him midst, and without end. 165
Fairest of stars, last in the train of night,
If better thou belong not to the dawn,
Sure pledge of day, that crown'st the smiling morn
With thy bright circlet, praise him in thy sphere,
While day arises, that sweet hour of prime. 170
Thou Sun, of this great world both eye and soul,
Acknowledge him thy greater, sound his praise
In thy eternal course, both when thou climb'st,
And when high noon hast gain'd, and when thou fall'st.
Moon, that now meets the orient sun, now fly'st, 175
With the fix'd stars, fix'd in their orb that flies;
And ye five other wand'ring fires that move
In mystic dance not without song, resound
His praise, who out of darkness call'd up light.
Air, and ye elements, the eldest birth 180
Of Nature's womb, that in quaternion run
Perpetual circle, multiform; and mix
And nourish all things; let your ceaseless change
Vary to our great Maker still new praise.
Ye mists and exhalations that now rise, 185
From hill or steaming lake, dusky or gray,
Till the sun paint your fleecy skirts with gold,
In honour to the world's great Author rise,
Whether to deck with clouds th' uncolour'd sky,
Or wet the thirsty earth with falling showers, 190
Rising or falling still advance his praise.
His praise ye winds, that from four quarters blow,
Breathe soft or loud; and wave your tops, ye pines,
With every plant, in sign of worship wave.
Fountains, and ye, that warble as ye flow, 195
Melodious murmurs, warbling tune his praise.
Join voices all ye living souls; ye birds,
That singing up to Heav'n-gate ascend,
Bear on your wings and in your notes his praise.

Ye that in waters glide, and ye that walk 200
 The earth, and stately tread, or lowly creep;
 Witnesses if I be silent, morn or even,
 To hill, or valley, fountain, or fresh shade
 Made vocal by my song, and taught his praise.
 Hail universal Lord! be bounteous still 205
 To give us only good; and if the night
 Have gather'd aught of evil, or conceal'd,
 Disperse it, as now light dispels the dark.

So pray'd they innocent, and to their thoughts
 Firm peace recover'd soon and wonted calm. 210
 On to their morning's rural work they haste
 Among sweet dewes and flow'rs; where any row
 Of fruit-trees over-woody reach'd too far
 Their pamper'd boughs, and needed hands to check
 Fruitless embraces: or they led the vine 215
 To wed her elm; she spous'd about him twines
 Her marriageable arms, and with her brings
 Her dow'r, th' adopted clusters, to adorn
 His barren leaves. Them thus employ'd beheld
 With pity Heav'n's high King, and to him call'd 220
 Raphael, the sociable sp'rit, that deign'd
 To travel with Tobias, and secur'd
 His marriage with the sev'ntimes-wedded maid.

Raphael, said he, thou hear'st what stir on earth
 Satan from Hell, 'scap'd through the darksome gulph, 225
 Hath rais'd in Paradise, and how disturb'd
 This night the human pair, how he designs
 In them at once to ruin all mankind.
 Go therefore, half this day as friend with friend
 Converse with Adam, in what bow'r or shade 230
 Thou find'st him from the heat of noon retir'd,
 To respite his day-labour with repast,
 Or with repose; and such discourse bring on,
 As may advise him of his happy state,
 Happiness in his pow'r left free to will, 235
 Left to his own free will; his will though free,
 Yet mutable: whence warn him to beware
 He swerve not too secure. Tell him withal
 His danger, and from whom; what enemy,
 Late fall'n himself from Heav'n, is plotting now 240
 The fall of others from like state of blifs;
 By violence? no, for that shall be withstood;

But by deceit and lies: this let him know,
Lest wilfully transgressing he pretend
Surprisal, unadmonish'd, unforewarn'd. 245

So spake th' eternal Father, and fulfill'd
All justice: nor delay'd the winged faint
After his charge receiv'd; but from among
Thousand celestial ardors, where he stood
Veil'd with his gorgeous wings, up springing light 250
Flew through the midst of Heav'n; th' angelic quires,
On each hand parting, to his speed gave way
Through all th' empyreal road; till at the gate
Of Heav'n arriv'd, the gate self-open'd wide,
On golden hinges turning, as by work 255
Divine the sov'reign Architect had fram'd.
From hence, no cloud, or, to obstruct his sight,
Star interpos'd, however small, he sees,
Not unconform to other shining globes,
Earth and the garden of God, with cedars crown'd 260
Above all hills. As when by night the glass
Of Galileo, less assur'd, observes
Imagin'd lands and regions in the moon:
Or pilot from amidst the Cyclades
Delos, or Samos first appearing, kens 265
A cloudy spot. Down thither prone in flight
He speeds, and through the vast ethereal sky
Sails between worlds and worlds, with steady wing
Now on the polar winds, then with quick fan
Winnows the buxom air; till within soar 270
Of tow'ring eagles, to all the fowls he seems
A Phoenix, gaz'd by all, as that sole bird,
When to inhume his relics in the sun's
Bright temple, to Egyptian Thebes he flies.
At once on th' eastern cliff of Paradise 275
He lights, and to his proper shape returns,
A Seraph wing'd: six wings he wore, to shade
His lineaments divine; the pair that clad
Each shoulder broad, came mantling o'er his breast
With regal ornament; the middle pair 280
Girt like a starry zone his waste, and round
Skirted his loins and thighs with downy gold
And colours dipt in Heav'n; the third his feet
Shadow'd from either heel with feather'd mail,
Sky tinctur'd grain. Like Maia's son he stood, 285

And shook his plumes, that heav'nly fragrance fill'd
The circuit wide. Strait knew him all the bands
Of angels under watch; and to his state,
And to his message high in honour rise;
For on some message high they guess'd him bound. 290
Their glitt'ring tents he pass'd, and now is come
Into the blissful field, through groves of myrrh,
And flow'ring odours, cassio, nard, and balm;
A wilderness of sweets; for nature here
Wanton'd as in her prime, and play'd at will 295
Her virgin fancies, pouring forth more sweet,
Wild above rule or art; enormous bliss.
Him through the spicy forest onward come
Adam discern'd, as in the door he sat
Of his cool bow'r, while now the mounted sun 300
Shot down direct his fervid rays to warm
Earth's inmost womb, more warmth than Adam needs;
And Eve within, due at her hour prepar'd
For dinner savoury fruits, of taste to please
True appetite, and not disrelish thirst 305
Of nect'rous draughts between, from milky stream,
Berry or grape: to whom thus Adam call'd.
Haste hither Eve, and worth thy sight behold
Eastward among those trees, what glorious shape
Comes this way moving; seems another morn 310
Ris'n on mid-noon; some great behest from Heav'n
To us perhaps he brings, and will vouchsafe
This day to be our guest. But go with speed,
And what thy stores contain, bring forth, and pour
Abundance, fit to honour and receive 315
Our heav'nly stranger: well we may afford
Our givers their own gifts, and large bestow
From large bestow'd, where nature multiplies
Her fertile growth, and by disburd'ning grows
More fruitful, which instructs us not to spare. 320
To whom thus Eve. Adam, earth's hallow'd mold,
Of God inspir'd, small store will serve, where store,
All seasons, ripe for use hangs on the stalk;
Save what by frugal storing firmness gains
To nourish, and superfluous moist consumes: 325
But I will haste, and from each bough and brake,
Each plant and juiciest gourd, will pluck such choice
To entertain our angel-guest, as he

Beholding shall confess, that here on earth
God hath dispens'd his bounties as in Heaven. 330

So saying, with dispatchful looks in haste
She turns, on hospitable thoughts intent
What choice to chuse for delicacy best,
What order, so contriv'd as not to mix
Tastes, not well join'd, inelegant, but bring 335
Taste after taste upheld with kindest change;
Bestirs her then, and from each tender stalk
Whatever earth, all bearing mother, yields
In India East or West, or middle shore
In Pontus, or the Punic coast, or where 340
Alcinous reign'd, fruit of all kinds, in coat
Rough or smooth rin'd, or bearded husk, or shell,
She gathers, tribute large, and on the board
Heaps with unsparing hand; for drink the grape
She crushes, inoffensive must, and meaths 345
From many a berry, and from sweet kernels press'd
She tempers dulcet creams; nor these to hold
Wants her fit vessels pure; then strows the ground
With rose and odours from the shrub unfum'd.

Mean while our primitive great sire, to meet 350
His godlike guest, walks forth, without more train
Accompanied than with his own complete
Perfections; in himself was all his state,
More solemn than the tedious pomp that waits
On princes, when their rich retinue long 255
Of horses led, and grooms besmear'd with gold,
Dazles the croud, and sets them all agape.
Nearer his presence Adam, though not aw'd,
Yet with submissive approach and reverence meek,
As to a superior nature, bowing low, 360
Thus said. Native of Heav'n, for other place
None can than Heav'n such glorious shape contain;
Since by descending from the thrones above,
Those happy places thou hast deign'd a while
To want, and honour these, vouchsafe with us 365
Two only, who yet by sov'reign gift possess
This spacious ground, in yonder shady bower
To rest, and what the garden choicest bears
To sit and taste, till this meridian heat
Be over, and the sun more cool decline. 370

Whom thus th' angelic virtue answer'd mild.

Adam, I therefore came ; nor art thou such
 Created, or such place hast here to dwell,
 As may not oft invite, though sp'rits of Heav'n
 To visit thee : lead on then where thy bower 375
 O'er shades ; for these mid-hours, till evening rise,
 I have at will. So to the sylvan lodge
 They came, that like Pomona's arbour smil'd
 With flow'rets deck'd and fragrant smells ; but Eve
 Undeck'd save with herself, more lovely fair 380
 Than wood-nymph, or the fairest goddess feign'd
 Of three that in mount Ida naked strove,
 Stood to entertain her guest from Heav'n ; no veil
 She needed, virtue-proof ; no thought infirm
 Alter'd her cheek. On whom the angel hail 385
 Bestow'd, the holy salutation us'd
 Long after to blest'd Mary, second Eve.

Hail mother of mankind, whose fruitful womb
 Shall fill the world more numerous with thy sons,
 Than with these various fruits the trees of God 390
 Have heap'd this table. Rais'd of grassy turf
 Their table was, and mossy seats had round ;
 And on her ample square from side to side
 All autumn pil'd, though spring and autumn here
 Danc'd hand in hand. A while discourse they hold ;
 No fear lest dinner cool ; when thus began 396
 Our author. Heav'nly stranger, please to taste
 These bounties, which our Nourisher, from whom
 All perfect good, unmeasur'd out, descends,
 To us for food and for delight hath caus'd 400
 The earth to yield ; unfavoury food perhaps
 To spiritual natures ; only this I know,
 That one celestial Father gives to all.

To whom the angel. Therefore what he gives
 (Whose praise be ever sung) to man in part 405
 Spiritual, may of purest spirits be found
 No ingrateful food : and food-alike those pure
 Intelligential substances require,
 As doth your rational ; and both contain
 Within them every lower faculty 410
 Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste,
 Tasting concoct, digest, assimilate,
 And corpor'al to incorporeal turn.
 For know, whatever was created, needs

To be sustain'd and fed: of elements 415
The grosser feeds the purer, earth the sea,
Earth and the sea feed air, the air those fires
Ethereal, and as lowest first the moon;
Whence in her visage round those spots, unpurg'd
Vapours not yet into her substance turn'd. 420
Nor doth the moon no nourishment exhale
From her moist continent to higher orbs.
The sun, that light imparts to all, receives
From all his alimential recompense.
In humid exhalations, and at ev'n: 425
Supps with the ocean. Though in Heav'n the trees
Of life ambrosial fruitage bear, and vines
Yield nectar; though from off the boughs each morn
We brush mellifluous dews, and find the ground
Cover'd with pearly grain: yet God hath here 430
Varied his bounty so with new delights,
As may compare with Heaven; and to taste,
Think not I shall be nice. So down they sat,
And to their viands fell: nor seemingly
The angel, nor in mist, the common gloss 435
Of Theologians; but with keen dispatch
Of real hunger, and concoctive heat
To transubstantiate: what redounds, transpires
Through spr'its with ease; nor wonder; if by fire
Of sooty coal th' empiric alchemist 440
Can turn, or holds it possible to turn,
Metals of drossiest ore to perfect gold,
As from the mine. Mean while at table Eve
Minister'd naked, and their flowing cups
With pleasant liquors crown'd: O innocence 445
Deserving Paradise! if ever, then,
Then had the sons of God excuse to have been
Enamour'd at that sight; but in those hearts
Love unlibidinous reign'd, nor jealousy
Was understood, the injur'd lover's hell. 450
Thus when with meats and drinks they had suffic'd,
Not burden'd nature, sudden mind arose
In Adam, not to let th' occasion pass
Giv'n him by this great conference to know
Of things above his world, and of their being 455
Who dwell in Heav'n, whose excellence he saw
Transcend his own so far, whose radiant forms,

Divine effulgence, whose high pow'r so far
Exceeded human, and his wary speech
Thus to th' empyreal minister he fram'd. 460

Inhabitant with God, now know I well
Thy favour, in this honour done to man,
Under whose lowly roof thou hast vouchsaf'd
To enter, and these earthly fruits to taste,
Food not of angels, yet accepted so, 465
As that more willingly thou couldst not seem
At Heav'n's high feasts to have fed: yet what compare?

To whom the winged hierarch reply'd.
O Adam, one Almighty is, from whom
All things proceed, and up to him return, 470
If not deprav'd from good, created all
Such to perfection, one first matter all,
Indued with various forms, various degrees
Of substance, and in things that live, of life;
But more refin'd, more spirituous, and pure, 475
As nearer to him plac'd, or nearer tending
Each in their several active spheres assign'd,
Till body up to spirit work, in bounds
Proportion'd to each kind. So from the root
Springs lighter the green stalk, from whence the leaves
More airy, last the bright consummate flow'r 481
Spirits odorous breathes: flow'rs and their fruit,
Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublim'd,
To vital sp'rits aspire, to animal,
To intellectual; give both life and sense, 385
Fancy and understanding; whence the soul
Reason receives, and reason is her being,
Discursive, or intuitive: discourse
Is ofttest yours, the latter most is ours,
Diff'ring but in degree, of kind the same. 490
Wonder not then, what God for you saw good
If I refuse not, but convert, as you,
To proper substance: time may come, when men
With angels may participate, and find
No inconvenient diet, nor too light fare; 495
And from these corporeal nutriments perhaps
Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit,
Improv'd by tract of time, and wing'd ascend
Ethereal, as we, or may at choice
Here or in heav'nly Paradises dwell; 500

If ye be found obedient, and retain
Unalterably firm his love entire,
Whose progeny you are. Mean while enjoy
Your fill what happiness this happy state
Can comprehend, incapable of more. 205

To whom the patriarch of mankind reply'd.
O favourable spirit, propitious guest,
Well hast thou taught the way that might direct
Our knowledge, and the scale of nature set
From center to circumference, whereon, 510
In contemplation of created things,
By steps we may ascend to God. But say,
What meant that caution join'd, if ye be found
Obedient? can we want obedience then
To him, or possibly his love desert, 515
Who form'd us from the dust, and plac'd us here
Full to the utmost measure of what bliss
Human desires can seek or apprehend?

To whom the Angel. Son of Heav'n and earth,
Attend: That thou art happy, owe to God; 520
That thou continuest such, owe to thyself,
That is, to thy obedience; therein stand.
This was that caution giv'n thee; be advis'd.
God made thee perfect, not immutable;
And good he made thee, but to persevere 525
He left it in thy pow'r; ordain'd thy will
By nature free, not over-rul'd by fate
Inextricable, or strict necessity:
Our voluntary service he requires,
Not our necessitated; such with him 530
Finds no acceptance, nor can find; for how
Can hearts, not free, be try'd whether they serve
Willing or no, who will but what they must
By destiny, and can no other chuse?
Myself and all th' angelic host, that stand 535
In sight of God enthron'd, our happy state
Hold, as you yours, while our obedience holds;
On other surety none: freely we serve,
Because we freely love, as in our will
To love or not; in this we stand or fall: 540
And some are fall'n, to disobedience fall'n,
And so from Heav'n to deepest Hell; O fall
From what high state of bliss into what woe!

To whom our great progenitor. Thy words
 Attentive, and with more delighted ear, 545
 Divine instructor, I have heard, than when
 Cherubic songs by night from neighb'ring hills
 Aerial music send: nor knew I not
 To be both will and deed created free;
 Yet that we never shall forget to love 550
 Our Maker, and obey him whose command
 Single is yet so just, my constant thoughts
 Assur'd me, and still assure: though what thou tell'st
 Hath past in Heav'n, some doubt within me move,
 But more desire to hear, if thou consent, 555
 The full relation, which must needs be strange,
 Worthy of sacred silence to be heard:
 And we have yet large day; for scarce the sun
 Hath finish'd half his journey, and scarce begins
 His other half in the great zone of Heav'n. 560

Thus Adam made request; and Raphael,
 After short pause assenting, thus began.

High matter thou injoin'st me, O prime of men,
 Sad task and hard; for how shall I relate
 To human sense th' invisible exploits 565
 Of warring spirits? how without remorse
 The ruin of so many glorious once
 And perfect while they stood! how last unfold
 The secrets of another world, perhaps
 Not lawful to reveal! yet for thy good 570
 This is dispens'd; and what surmounts the reach
 Of human sense, I shall delineate so,
 By likening spiritual to corporeal forms,
 As may express them best; though what if earth
 Be but the shadow of Heav'n, and things therein 575
 Each to other like, more than on earth is thought?

As yet this world was not, and Chaos wild
 Reign'd where these Heav'ns now roll, where earth now
 Upon her center pois'd; when on a day, [rests
 (For time, though in eternity, apply'd 580
 To motion, measures all things durable
 By present, past, and future) on such day
 As Heav'n's great year brings forth, th' empyreal host
 Of angels, by imperial summons call'd,
 Innumerable before th' Almighty's throne 585
 Forthwith from all the ends of Heav'n appear'd

Under their hierarchs in orders bright :
Ten thousand thousand ensigns high advanc'd,
Standards and gonfalons 'twixt van and rear
Stream in the air, and for distinction serve
Of hierarchies, of orders, and degrees;
Or in their glitt'ring tiffues bear emblaz'd
Holy memorials, acts of zeal and love
Recorded eminent. Thus when in orbs
Of circuit inexpressible they stood,
Orb within orb, the Father infinite,
By whom in blifs embosom'd sat the Son,
Amidst as from a flaming mount, whose top
Brightness had made invisible, thus spake.

Hear all ye angels, progeny of light,
Thrones, dominations, principedoms, virtues, powers,
Hear my decree, which unrevok'd shall stand.
This day I have begot whom I declare
My only Son, and on this holy hill
Him have anointed, whom you now behold
At my right hand; your head I him appoint;
And by myself have sworn to him shall bow
All knees in Heav'n, and shall confess him Lord:
Under his great vicegerent reign abide
United as one individual soul
For ever happy : Him who disobey
Me disobeys, breaks union, and that day
Cast out from God and blessed vision, falls
Into utter darkness, deep ingulf'd, his place
Ordain'd without redemption, without end.

So spake th' Omnipotent, and with his words
All seem'd well pleas'd; all seem'd, but were not all.
That day, as other solemn days, they spent
In song and dance about the sacred hill;
Mystical dance, which yonder starry sphere
Of planets and of fix'd in all her wheels
Resembles nearest, mazes intricate,
Eccentric, intervolv'd, yet regular
Then most when most irregular they seem;
And in their motions harmony divine
So smooths her charming tones, that God's own ear
Listens delighted. Evening now approach'd
(For we have also our evening and our morn,
We ours for change delectable, not need)

Forthwith from dance to sweet repast they turn 630
Desirous; all in circles as they stood,
Tables are set, and on a sudden pil'd
With angels food, and rubied nectar flows
In pearl, in diamond, and massy gold,
Fruit of delicious vines, the growth of Heav'n. 635
On flow'rs repos'd, and with fresh flow'rets crown'd,
They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet
Quaff immortality and joy, secure
Of surfeit, where full measure only bounds
Excess, before th' all-bounteous King, who show'r'd 640
With copious hand, rejoicing in their joy.
Now when ambrosial night with clouds exhal'd
From that high mount of God, whence light and shade
Spring both, the face of brightest Heav'n had chang'd
To grateful twilight (for night comes not there 945
In darker veil) and roseat dew dispos'd
All but th' unsleeping eyes of God to rest;
Wide over all the plain, and wider far
Than all this globous earth in plain outspread,
(Such are the courts of God) th' angelic throng, 650
Dispers'd in bands and files, their camp extend
By living streams among the trees of life,
Pavilions numberless, and sudden rear'd,
Celestial tabernacles, where they slept
Fann'd with cool winds; save those who in their course
Melodious hymns about the sov'reign throne 656
Alternate all night long. But not so wak'd
Satan; so call him now, his former name
Is heard no more in Heav'n; he of the first,
If not the first arch-angel, great in power, 660
In favour and pre-eminence, yet fraught
With envy against the Son of God, that day
Honour'd by his great Father, and proclam'd
Messiah King anointed, could not bear
Through pride that sight, and thought himself impair'd.
Deep malice thence conceiving and disdain, 666
Soon as midnight brought on the dusky hour
Friendliest to sleep and silence, he resolv'd
With all his legions to dislodge, and leave
Unworship'd, unbey'd the throne supreme 670
Contemptuous, and his next subordinate
Awak'ning, thus to him in secret spake.

Sleep'st thou, companion dear, what sleep can close
Thy eye-lids? and remember'st what decree
Of yesterday, so late hath pass'd the lips 675
Of Heav'n's Almighty. Thou to me thy thoughts
Wast wont, I mine to thee was wont to impart;
Both waking we were one; how then can now
Thy sleep dissent? New laws thou see'st impos'd;
New laws from him who reigns, new minds may raise
In us who serve, new counsels, to debate 681
What doubtful may ensue: more in this place
To utter is not safe. Assemble thou
Of all those myriads which we lead the chief;
Tell them that by command, ere yet dim night 685
Her shadowy cloud withdraws, I am to haste,
And all who under me their banners wave,
Homeward with flying march where we possess
The quarters of the north; there to prepare
Fit entertainment to receive our King 690
The great Messiah, and his new commands,
Who speedily through all the hierarchies
Intends to pass triumphant, and give laws.
So spake the false arch-angel, and infus'd
Bad influence into th' unwary breast 695
Of his associate: he together calls,
Or several one by one, the regent powers,
Under him regent; tells, as he was taught,
That the Most High commanding, now ere night,
Now ere dim night had disincumber'd Heav'n, 700
The great hierarchal standard was to move;
Tells the suggested cause, and casts between
Ambiguous words and jealousies, to sound
Or taint integrity: but all obey'd
The wonted signal, and superior voice 705
Of their great potentate; for great indeed
His name, and high was his degree in Heav'n;
His count'nance, as the morning-star that guides
The starry flock, allured them, and with lies
Drew after him the third part of Heav'n's host. 710
Mean while th' eternal eye, whose sight discerns
Abstrusest thoughts, from forth his holy mount,
And from within the golden lamps that burn
Nightly before him, saw, without their light,
Rebellion rising, saw in whom, how spread 715

Among the sons of morn, what multitudes
Were banded to oppose his high decree;
And smiling to his only Son thus said.

Son, thou in whom my glory I behold
In full resplendence, heir of all my might, 720
Nearly it now concerns us to be sure

Of our omnipotence, and with what arms
We mean to hold what anciently we claim
Of deity or empire: such a foe
Is rising, who intends to erect his throne 725

Equal to ours, throughout the spacious north;
Nor so content, hath in his thought to try
In battle, what our pow'r is, or our right.

Let us advise, and to this hazard draw
With speed what force is left, and all employ 730
In our defence, lest unawares we lose

This our high place, our sanctuary, our hill.

To whom the Son, with calm aspect and clear,
Lightning divine, ineffable, serene,
Made answer. Mighty Father, thou thy foes 735

Justly hast in derision, and secure
Laugh'st at their vain designs and tumults vain,
Matter to me of glory, whom their hate

Illustrates, when these see all regal pow'r
Giv'n me to quell their pride, and in event 740
Know whether I be dextrous to subdue

Thy rebels, or be found the worst in Heav'n.

So spake the Son; but Satan with his powers
Far was advanc'd on winged speed, an host
Innumerable as the stars of night, 745

Or stars of morning, dew drops, which the sun
Impearls on every leaf and every flower.

Regions they pass'd, the mighty regencies
Of seraphim, and potentates, and thrones,
In their triple degrees; regions to which 750

All thy dominion, Adam, is no more
Than what this garden is to all the earth,
And all the sea, from one entire globose

Stretch'd into longitude; which having pass'd,
At length into the limits of the north 755

They came, and Satan to his royal seat
High on a hill, far blazing, as a mount
Rais'd on a mount, with pyramids and tow'rs

From diamond quarries hewn, and rocks of gold ;
The palace of great Lucifer (so call
That structure in the dialect of men
Interpreted) which, not long after, he,
Affecting all equality with God,
In imitation of that mount whereon
Messiah was declar'd in sight of Heav'n,
The Mountain of the Congregation call'd ;
For thither he assembled all his train,
Pretending, so commanded, to consult
About the great reception of their King
Thither to come, and with calumnious art,
Of counterfeited truth thus held their ears.
Thrones, dominations, principedoms, virtues, pow'rs,
If these magnific titles yet remain
Not merely titular, since by decree
Another now hath to himself ingross'd
All pow'r, and us eclips'd under the name
Of King anointed ; for whom all this haste
Of midnight march, and hurried meeting here
This only to consult how we may best
With what may be devis'd of honours new
Receive him, coming to receive from us
Knee-tribute yet unpaid, prostration vile,
Too much for one, but double how endur'd,
To one and to his image now proclaim'd ?
But what if better counsels might erect
Our minds, and teach us to cast off this yoke ?
Will ye submit your necks, and chuse to bend
The supple knee ? ye will not, if I trust
To know ye right, or if ye know yourselves
Natives and sons of Heav'n possess'd before
By none, and if not equal all, yet free,
Equally free ; for orders and degrees
Jar not with liberty, but well consist.
Who can in reason then, or right, assume
Monarchy over such as live by right
His equals, if in pow'r and splendor less,
In freedom equal ? or can introduce
Law and edict on us, who without law
Err not ? much less for this to be our Lord,
And look for adoration to th' abuse
Of those imperial titles, which assert

Our being ordain'd to govern, not to serve.

Thus far his bold discourse without controul
Had audience, when among the seraphim
Abdiel, than whom none with more zeal ador'd 805
The Deity, and divine commands obey'd,
Stood up, and in a flame of zeal severe
The current of his fury thus oppos'd.

O argument blasphemous, false and proud!
Words which no ear ever to hear in Heav'n 810
Expected, lest of all from thee, ingrate,
In place thyself so high above thy peers.
Canst thou with impious obloquy condemn
The just decree of God, pronounc'd and sworn,
That to his only Son by right endued 815
With regal scepter, every soul in Heav'n
Shall bend the knee, and in that honour due
Confess him rightful King? Unjust thou sayst,
Flatly unjust, to bind with laws the free,
And equal over equals to let reign, 820
One over all with unsucceeded power.

Shalt thou give law to God, shalt thou dispute
With him the points of liberty, who made
Thee what thou art, and form'd the pow'rs of Heav'n
Such as he pleas'd, and circumscrib'd their being? 825
Yet, by experience taught, we know how good,
And of our good and of our dignity
How provident he is, how far from thought
To make us less, bent rather to exalt
Our happy state under one head more near 830
United. But to grant it thee unjust,
That equal over equals monarch reign:

Thyself, though great and glorious, dost thou count,
Or all angelic nature join'd in one,
Equal to him begotten Son? by whom, 835
As by his Word; the mighty Father made
All things, ev'n thee; and all the sp'rits of Heav'n
By him created in their bright degrees,
Crown'd them with glory, and to their glory nam'd
Thrones, dominations, principedoms, virtues, powers,
Essential pow'rs; nor by his reign obscur'd, 840
But more illustrious made; since he the head
One of our number thus reduc'd becomes;
His laws our laws; all honour to him done

Returns our own. Cease then this impious rage, 845
And tempt not these; but hasten to appease
Th' incens'd Father, and th' incens'd Son,
While pardon may be found in time besought.

So spake the fervent angel; but his zeal
None seconded, as out of season judg'd, 850
Or singular and rash; whereat rejoic'd
Th' apostate, and more haughty thus reply'd.

That we were form'd then say'st thou? and the work
Of secondary hands, by task transferr'd
From Father to his Son? strange point and new! 855
Doctrine which we would know whence learn'd: Who
When this creation was? remember'st thou [saw
Thy making, while the Maker gave thee being?
We know no time when we were not as now;
Know none before us, self-begot, self-rais'd 860
By our own quick'ning pow'r, when fatal course
Had circled his full orb, the birth mature
Of this our native Heav'n, ethereal sons.

Our puissance is our own; our own right hand
Shall teach us highest deeds, by proof to try 865
Who is our equal: then thou shalt behold
Whether by supplication we intend
Address, and to begirt th' almighty throne
Beseeching or besieging. This report,
These tidings carry to th' anointed King; 870
And fly, ere evil intercept thy flight.

He said, and as the found of waters deep
Hoarse murmur echo'd to his words applause
Through the infinite host; nor less for that
The flaming seraph fearless, though alone 875
Incompass'd round with foes, thus answer'd bold.

O alienate from God, O sp'rit accurs'd,
Forsaken of all good; I see thy fall
Determin'd, and thy hapless crew involv'd
In this perfidious fraud, contagion spread 880
Both of thy crime and punishment: henceforth
No more be troubled how to quit the yoke
Of God's Messiah; those indulgent laws
Will not be now vouchsaf'd; other decrees
Against thee are gone forth without recal; 885
That golden scepter, which thou didst reject,
Is now an iron rod to bruise and break

Thy disobedience. Well thou didst advise;
Yet not for thy advice or threats I fly
These wicked tents devoted, lest the wrath 890
Impendent, raging into sudden flame,
Distinguish not: for soon expect to feel
His thunder on thy head, devouring fire.
Then who created thee lamenting learn,
When who can uncreate thee thou shalt know. 895
So spake the seraph Abdiel, faithful found
Among the faithless; faithful only he;
Among innumerable false, unmov'd,
Unshaken, unseduc'd, untterrify'd,
His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal; 900
Nor number, nor example with him wrought
To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,
Though single. From amidst them forth he pass'd,
Long way through hostile scorn, which he sustain'd
Superior, nor of violence fear'd aught; 905
And with retorted scorn his back he turn'd
On those proud tow'rs to swift destruction doom'd.

End of the Fifth Book.

THE ARGUMENT.

Michael continues to relate how Michael and Gabriel were sent forth to punish Adam and his angels. The first fight described: Satan and his powers retire. Satan is left in a state of confusion and despair.

PARADISE LOST.

Michael then relates how he and Gabriel were sent forth to punish Adam and his angels. The first fight described: Satan and his powers retire. Satan is left in a state of confusion and despair.

BOOK VI.

THE ARGUMENT.

Raphael continues to relate how Michael and Gabriel were sent forth to battle against Satan and his angels. The first fight described: Satan and his powers retire under night: he calls a council, invents devilish engines, which in the second day's fight put Michael and his angels to some disorder; but they at length pulling up mountains, overwhelmed both the force and machines of Satan: yet the tumult not so ending, God, on the third day, sends Messiah his Son, for whom he had reserved the glory of that victory: he, in the power of his Father, coming to the place, and causing all his legions to stand still on either side, with his chariot and thunder driving into the midst of his enemies, pursues them, unable to resist, towards the wall of Heaven; which opening, they leap down with horror and confusion into the place of punishment prepared for them in the deep: Messiah returns with triumph to his Father.

PARADISE LOST.

B O O K VI.

ALL night the dreadless angel, unpursu'd,
Through Heav'n's wide champain held his way;
'till morn,
Wak'd by the circling hours, with rosy hand
Unbarr'd the gates of light. There is a cave
Within the mount of God, fast by his throne, 5
Where light and darkness in perpetual round
Lodge and dislodge by turns, which makes thro' Heav'n
Grateful vicissitude, like day and night;
Light issues forth, and at the other door
Obsequious darkness enters, till her hour 10
To veil the Heav'n, though darkness there might well
Seem twilight here: and now went forth the morn,
Such as in highest Heav'n, array'd in gold
Empyrean; from before her vanish'd night,
Shot through with orient beams; when all the plain 15
Cover'd with thick embattled squadrons bright,
Chariots, and flaming arms, and fiery steeds
Reflecting blaze on blaze, first met his view:
War he perceiv'd, war in procinct, and found
Already known what he for news had thought 20
To have reported: gladly then he mix'd
Among these friendly pow'rs, who him receiv'd
With joy and acclamations loud, that one,
That of so many myriads fall'n, yet one
Return'd not lost: On to the sacred hill 25
They led him high applauded, and present

Before the seat supreme ; from whence a voice
From midst a golden cloud thus mild was heard.

Servant of God, well done, well hast thou fought
The better fight, who single hast maintain'd, 30

Against revolted multitudes, the cause
Of truth, in word mightier than they in arms ;
And for the testimony of truth hast borne
Universal reproach, far worse to bear
Than violence ; for this was all thy care 35

To stand approv'd in sight of God, though worlds
Judg'd thee perverse : the easier conquest now
Remains thee, aided by this host of friends,
Back on thy foes more glorious to return,
Than scorn'd thou didst depart, and to subdue 40
By force, who reason for their law refuse,
Right reason for their law, and for their King
Messiah, who by right of merit reigns.

Go Michael, of celestial armies prince,
And thou in military prowess next 45

Gabriel, lead forth to battle these my sons
Invincible, lead forth my armed saints
By thousands and by millions rang'd for fight,
Equal in number to that godless crew
Rebellious ; them with fire and hostile arms 50

Fearless assault, and to the brow of Heav'n
Pursuing drive them out from God and bliss,
Into their place of punishment, the gulf
Of Tartarus, which ready opens wide
His fiery chaos to receive their fall. 55

So spake the sov'reign voice, and clouds began
To darken all the hill, and smoke to roll
In dusky wreaths, reluctant flames, the sign
Of wrath awak'd ; nor with less dread the loud
Ethereal trumpet from on high 'gan blow : 60

At which command the powers militant,
That stood for Heav'n, in mighty quadrate join'd
Of union irresistible, mov'd on

In silence their bright legions, to the sound
Of instrumental harmony, that breath'd 65

Heroic ardour to adventurous deeds,
Under their godlike leaders, in the cause
Of God and his Messiah. On they move
Indissolubly firm ; nor obvious hill,

Nor strait'ning vale, nor wood, nor stream divides 70
Their perfect ranks; for high above the ground
Their march was, and the passive air upbore
Their nimble tread; as when the total kind
Of birds, in orderly array on wing,
Came summon'd over Eden to receive 75
Their names of thee; so over many a tract
Of Heav'n they march'd, and many a province wide
Tenfold the length of this terrene: at last
Far in th' horizon to the north appear'd
From skirt to skirt a fiery region, stretch'd 80
In battalious aspect, and nearer view
Bristled with upright beams innumerable
Of rigid spears, and helmets throng'd, and shields
Various, with boastful argument portray'd,
The banded pow'rs of Satan hastening on 85
With furious expedition; for they ween'd
That self-same day, by fight, or by surprise,
To win the mount of God, and on his throne
To set the envier of his state, the proud
Aspirer; but their thoughts prov'd fond and vain 90
In the mid way: though strange to us it seem'd
At first, that angel should with angel war,
And in fierce hosting meet, who wont to meet
So oft in festivals of joy and love
Unanimous, as sons of one great fire, 95
Hymning th' eternal Father: but the shout
Of battle now began, and rushing sound
Of onset ended soon each milder thought.
High in the midst, exalted as a god,
Th' apostate in his sun-bright chariot sat, 100
Idol of majesty divine, inclos'd
With flaming cherubim and golden shields;
Then lighted from his gorgeous throne, for now
'Twixt host and host but narrow space was left,
A dreadful interval! and front to front 105
Presented stood in terrible array
Of hideous length: before the cloudy van,
On the rough edge of battle ere it join'd,
Satan with vast and haughty strides advanc'd,
Came towring, arm'd in adamant and gold; 110
Abdiel that sight endur'd not, where he stood
Among the mightiest, bent on highest deeds,

And thus his own undaunted heart explores.

O Heav'n! that such resemblance of the Highest
Should yet remain, where faith and realty 115
Remain not: wherefore should not strength and might
There fail where virtue fails, or weakest prove
Where boldest, though to fight unconquerable?
His puissance, trusting in th' Almighty's aid,
I mean to try, whose reason I have try'd 120
Unsound and false; nor is it aught but just,
That he who in debate of truth hath won,
Should win in arms, in both disputes alike
Victor; though brutish that contest and foul,
When reason hath to deal with force, yet so 125
Most reason is that reason overcome.

So pondering, and from his armed peers
Forth stepping opposite, half way he met
His daring foe, at this prevention more
Incens'd, and thus securely him defy'd. 130

Proud, art thou met? thy hope was to have reach'd
The highth of thy aspiring unoppos'd,
The throne of God unguarded, and his side
Abandon'd at the terror of thy power
Or potent tongue: fool, not to think how vain 135
Against th' Omnipotent to rise in arms;
Who out of smallest things could, without end,
Have rais'd incessant armies to defeat
Thy folly; or with solitary hand
Reaching beyond all limit, at one blow 140
Unaided could have finish'd thee, and whelm'd
Thy legions under darkness: but thou see'st
All are not of thy train; there be who faith
Prefer, and piety to God, though then
To thee not visible, when I alone 145
Seem'd in thy world erroneous to dissent
From all: my sect thou see'st; now learn too late
How few sometimes may know, when thousands err.

Whom the grand foe, with scornful eye askance,
Thus answer'd. Ill for thee, but in wish'd hour 150
Of my revenge, first sought for thou return'st
From flight, seditious angel, to receive
Thy merited reward, the first assay
Of this right hand provok'd, since first that tongue,
Inspir'd with contradiction, durst oppose 155

A third part of the gods, in synod met
Their deities to assert, who, while they feel
Vigour divine within them, can allow
Omnipotence to none. But well thou com'st
Before thy fellows, ambitious to win 160
From me some plume, that thy success may show
Destruction to the rest: this pause between
(Unanswer'd lest thou boast) to let thee know;
At first I thought that liberty and Heav'n
To heav'nly souls had been all one; but now 165
I see that most through sloth had rather serve,
Ministring sp'rits, train'd up in feast and song;
Such hast thou arm'd, the minstrelsy of Heav'n,
Servility with freedom to contend,
As both their deeds compar'd this day shall prove. 170

To whom in brief thus Abdiel stern reply'd.
Apostate still thou err'st, nor end wilt find,
Of erring, from the path of truth remote:
Unjustly thou deprav'st it with the name
Of servitude, to serve whom God ordains, 175
Or Nature; God and Nature bid the same,
When he who rules is worthiest, and excels
Them whom he governs. This is servitude,
To serve th' unwise, or him who hath rebell'd
Against his worthier, as thine now serve thee, 180
Thyself not free, but to thyself inthrall'd;
Yet lewdly dar'st our ministr'ring upbraid.
Reign thou in Hell, thy kingdom; let me serve
In Heav'n God ever blest, and his divine
Behests obey, worthiest to be obey'd; 185
Yet chains in Hell, not realms, expect; mean while
From me return'd, as erst thou saidst, from flight,
This greeting on thy impious crest receive.

So saying, a noble stroke he lifted high,
Which hung not, but so swift with tempest fell 190
On the proud crest of Satan, that no sight,
Nor motion of swift thought, less could his shield
Such ruin intercept: ten paces huge
He back recoil'd; the tenth on bended knee
His massy spear upstay'd; as if on earth 195
Winds under ground, or waters forcing way
Sidelong had push'd a mountain from his seat,
Half sunk with all his pines. Amazement seiz'd

The rebel thrones, but greater rage to see
Thus foil'd their mightiest ; ours joy fill'd, and shout,
Presage of victory, and fierce desire 201
Of battle : whereat Michael bid sound
Th' arch-angel trumpet ; through the vast of Heav'n
It sounded, and the faithful armies rung
Hosanna to the Highest : nor stood at gaze 205
The adverse legions, nor less hideous join'd
The horrid shock. Now storming fury rose,
And clamour, such as heard in Heav'n till now
Was never : arms on armour clashing bray'd
Horrible discord, and the madding wheels 210
Of brazen chariots rag'd ; dire was the noise
Of conflict ; over head the dismal hiss
Of fiery darts in flaming volleys flew,
And flying vaulted either host with fire.
So under fiery cope together rush'd 215
Both battles main, with ruinous assault
And inextinguishable rage ; all Heav'n
Refounded, and had earth been then, all earth
Had to her center shook. What wonder ? when
Millions of fierce encountring angels fought 220
On either side, the least of whom could wield
These elements, and arm him with the force
Of all their regions : how much more of pow'r
Army against army numberless to raise
Dreadful combustion warring, and disturb, 225
Though not destroy, their happy native seat ;
Had not th' eternal King omnipotent,
From his strong hold of Heav'n high over-rul'd
And limited their might ; though number'd such
As each divided legion might have seem'd 230
A numerous host, in strength each armed hand
A legion, led in fight, yet leader seem'd
Each warrior single as in chief, expert
When to advance, or stand, or turn the sway
Of battle, open when, and when to close 235
The ridges of grim war : no thought of flight,
None of retreat, no unbecoming deed
That argu'd fear ; each on himself rely'd,
As only in his arm the moment lay
Of victory : deeds of eternal fame 240
Were done, but infinite ; for wide was spread

That war and various, sometimes on firm ground
A standing fight, then soaring on main wing
Tormented all the air; all air seem'd then
Conflicting fire: long time in even scale 245
The battle hung; till Satan, who that day
Prodigious pow'r had shown, and met in arms
No equal, ranging through the dire attack
Of fighting seraphim confus'd, at length
Saw where the sword of Michael smote, and fell'd 250
Squadrons at once; with huge two-handed sway
Brandish'd aloft, the horrid edge came down
Wide waisting; such destruction to withstand
He halted, and oppos'd the rocky orb
Of tenfold adamant, his ample shield, 255
A vast circumference: At his approach
The great arch-angel from his warlike toil
Surceas'd, and glad, as hoping here to end
Intestine war in Heav'n, th' arch-foe subdu'd,
Or captive dragg'd in chains, with hostile frown 260
And visage all inflam'd first thus began.

Author of evil, unknown till thy revolt,
Unnam'd in Heav'n, now plenteous as thou seest
Those acts of hateful strife, hateful to all,
Though heaviest by just measure on thyself 265
And thy adherents: how hast thou disturb'd
Heav'n's blessed peace, and into nature brought
Misery, uncreated till the crime
Of thy rebellion? how hast thou instill'd
Thy malice into thousands, once upright 270
And faithful, now prov'd false? But think not here
To trouble holy rest; Heav'n casts thee out
From all her confines. Heav'n, the seat of bliss,
Brooks not the works of violence and war.
Hence then, and evil go with thee along, 275
Thy offspring, to the place of evil, Hell,
Thou and thy wicked crew; there mingle broils,
Ere this avenging sword begin thy doom,
Or some more sudden vengeance wing'd from God
Precipitate thee with augmented pain. 280

So spake the prince of angels; to whom thus
The adversary. Nor think thou with wind
Of airy threats to awe whom yet with deeds
Thou canst not. Hast thou turn'd the least of these

To flight, or if to fall, but that they rise 285
Unvanquish'd, easier to transact with me
That thou shouldst hope, imperious, and with threats
To chace me hence? err not that so shall end
The strife which thou call'st evil, but we stile
The strife of glory; which we mean to win, 290
Or turn this Heav'n itself into the Hell
Thou fablest; here however to dwell free,
If not to reign: mean while thy utmost force,
And join him nam'd Almighty to thy aid,
I fly not, but have fought thee far and nigh. 295

They ended parle, and both address'd for fight
Unspeakable; for who, though with the tongue
Of angels, can relate, or to what things
Likens on earth conspicuous, that may lift
Human imagination to such highth 300
Of godlike pow'r? for likest gods they seem'd,
Stood they or mov'd, in stature, motion, arms,
Fit to decide the empire of great Heav'n.
Now wav'd their fiery swords, and in the air
Made horrid circles; two broad suns their shields 305
Blaz'd opposite, while expectation stood
In horror; from each hand with speed retir'd,
Where erst was thickest fight, th' angelic throng,
And left large field, unsafe within the wind
Of such commotion; such, as to set forth 310
Great things by small, if nature's concord broke,
Among the constellations war were sprung,
Two planets rushing with aspect malign
Of fiercest opposition in mid sky
Should combat, and their jarring spheres confound. 315
Together both, with next to almighty arm
Up-lifted imminent, one stroke they aim'd
That might determine, and not need repeat,
As not of pow'r at once; nor odds appear'd
In might or swift prevention: but the sword 320
Of Michael from the armoury of God
Was giv'n him temper'd so, that neither keen
Nor solid might resist that edge: it met
The sword of Satan with steep force to smite
Descending, and in half cut sheer; nor stay'd, 325
But with swift wheel reverse, deep entering shar'd
All his right side: then Satan first knew pain,

And writh'd him to and fro convolv'd; so fore
The griding sword with discontinuous wound
Pass'd through him: but th' ethereal substance clos'd,
Not long divisible; and from the gash 331

A stream of nect'rous humour issuing flow'd
Sanguine, such as celestial sp'rits may bleed,
And all his armour stain'd, ere while so bright.
Forthwith on all sides to his aid was run 335

By angels many and strong, who interpos'd
Defence, while others bore him on their shields
Back to his chariot, where it stood retir'd
From off the files of war: there they him laid
Gnashing for anguish, and despite, and shame, 340
To find himself not matchless, and his pride
Humbled by such rebuke, so far beneath
His confidence to equal God in pow'r.

Yet soon he heal'd; for sp'rits that live throughout
Vital in ev'ry part, not as frail man 345
In entrails, heart or head, liver or reins,
Cannot but by annihilating die;

Nor in their liquid texture mortal wound
Receive, no more than can the fluid air:
All heart they live, all head, all eye, all ear, 350
All intellect, all sense; and as they please,
They limb themselves, and colour, shape, or size
Assume, as likes them best, condense or rare.

Mean while in other parts like deeds deserv'd
Memorial, where the might of Gabriel fought, 355
And with fierce ensigns pierc'd the deep array
Of Moloch furious king; who him defy'd,

And at his chariot wheels to drag him bound
Threaten'd, nor from the Holy One of Heav'n
Refrain'd his tongue blasphemous; but anon 360

Down cloven to the waste, with shatter'd arms
And uncouth pain fled bellowing. On each wing
Uriel and Raphael, his vaunting foe,
Though huge, and in a rock of diamond arm'd,
Vanquish'd Adramelech, and Asmadai, 365

Two potent thrones, that to be less than gods
Disdain'd, but meaner thoughts learn'd in their flight,
Mangled with ghastly wounds through plate and mail.
Nor stood unmindful Abdiel to annoy

The athiest crew, but with redoubled blow 370

Ariel and Arioch, and the violence
 Of Ramiel scorch'd and blasted, overthrew.
 I might relate of thousands, and their names
 Eternize here on earth; but those elect
 Angels, contented with their fame in Heav'n, 375
 Seek not the praise of men: the other sort,
 In might though wondrous, and in acts of war,
 Nor of renown less eager, yet by doom
 Cancell'd from Heav'n and sacred memory,
 Nameless in dark oblivion let them dwell. 380
 For strength from truth divided and from just,
 Illaudable, nought merits but dispraise
 And ignominy, yet to glory aspires,
 Vain-glorious, and through infamy seeks fame:
 Therefore eternal silence be their doom. 385

And now their mightiest quell'd, the battle swerv'd,
 With many an inroad gor'd; deformed rout
 Enter'd, and foul disorder; all the ground
 With shiver'd armour strown, and on a heap
 Chariot and charioteer lay overturn'd, 390
 And fiery foaming steeds; what stood, recoil'd
 O'er-wearied, through the faint Satanic host,
 Defensive scarce, or with pale fear surpriz'd,
 Then first with fear surpris'd and sense of pain,
 Fled ignominious, to such evil brought 395
 By sin of disobedience, till that hour
 Not liable to fear, or flight, or pain.
 Far otherwise th' inviolable fairs
 In cubic phalanx firm advanc'd entire,
 Invulnerable, impenetrably arm'd; 400
 Such high advantages their innocence
 Gave them above their foes, not to have sinn'd,
 Not to have disobey'd; in fight they stood
 Unwearied, unobnoxious to be pain'd 404
 By wound, though from their place by violence mov'd.

Now night her course began, and over Heav'n
 Inducing darkness, grateful truce impos'd,
 And silence on the odious din of war:
 Under her cloudy covert both retir'd,
 Victor and vanquish'd: on the foughten field 410
 Michael and his angels prevalent
 Incamping, plac'd in guard their watches round,
 Cherubic waving fires: on th' other part

Satan with his rebellious disappear'd,
Far in the dark dislodg'd; and void of rest, 415
His potentates to council call'd by night;
And in the midst thus undismay'd began.

O now in danger try'd, now known in arms
Not to be overpow'r'd, companions dear,
Found worthy not of liberty alone, 420
Too mean pretence, but what we more affect,
Honour, dominion, glory, and renown;
Who have sustain'd one day in doubtful fight
(And if one day, why not eternal days?)
What Heav'n's Lord had pow'rfullest to send 425
Against us from about his throne, and judg'd
Sufficient to subdue us to his will,
But proves not so: then fallible, it seems,
Of future we may deem him, though till now
Omniscient thought. True is, less firmly arm'd, 430
Some disadvantage we endur'd and pain,
Till now not known, but known as soon contemn'd;
Since now we find this our empyreal form
Incapable of mortal injury;

Imperishable, and though pierc'd with wounds, 435
Soon closing, and by native vigour heal'd.
Of evil then so small as easy think
The remedy; perhaps more valid arms,
Weapons more violent, when next we meet,
May serve to better us, and worse our foes, 440
Or equal what between us made the odds,
In nature none: if other hidden cause
Left them superior, while we can preserve
Unhurt our minds, and understanding sound,
Due search and consultation will disclose. 445

He sat; and in th' assembly next upstood
Nisroch, of principalities the prime;
As one he stood-escap'd from cruel fight,
Sore toil'd, his riven arms to havock hewn,
And cloudy in aspect thus answ'ring spake. 450

Deliverer from new lords, leader to free
Enjoyment of our right as gods; yet hard
For gods, and too unequal work we find,
Against unequal arms to fight in pain,
Against unpain'd, impassive; from which evil 455
Ruin must needs ensue; for what avails,

Valour or strength, though matchless, quell'd with pain
Which all subdues, and makes remiss the hands
Of mightiest? sense of pleasure we may well
Spare out of life perhaps, and not repine, 460
But live content, which is the calmest life:
But pain is perfect misery, the worst
Of evils, and excessive, overturns
All patience. He who therefore can invent
With what more forcible we may offend 465
Our yet unwounded enemies, or arm
Ourselves with like defence, to me deserves
No less than for deliverance what we owe.

Whereto with look compos'd Satan reply'd.
Not uninvented that, which thou aright 470
Believ'st so main to our success, I bring.
Which of us who beholds the bright surface
Of this etherous mold whereon we stand,
This continent of spacious Heav'n, adorn'd
With plant, fruit, flow'r ambrosial, gems and gold; 475
Whose eye so superficially surveys
These things, as not to mind from whence they grow
Deep under ground, materials dark and crude,
Of spirituous and firey spume, till touch'd
With Heaven's ray, and temper'd they shoot forth 480
So beauteous, op'ning to the ambient light?
These in their dark nativity the deep
Shall yield us, pregnant with infernal flame;
Which into hollow engines, long and round,
Thick-ramm'd, at th' other bore with touch of fire 485
Dilated and infuriate, shall send forth
From far, with thund'ring noise, among our foes
Such implements of mischief, as shall dash
To pieces, and o'erwhelm whatever stands
Adverse, that they shall fear we have disarm'd 490
The Thund'rer of his only dreaded bolt.
Nor long shall be our labour; yet ere dawn,
Effect shall end our wish. Mean while revive;
Abandon fear; to strength and counsel join'd
Think nothing hard, much less to be despair'd. 495

He ended, and his words their drooping chear
Enlighten'd, and their languish'd hope reviv'd.
Th' invention all admir'd, and each, how he
To be th' inventor miss'd; so easy it seem'd

Once found, which yet unfound most would have thought
Impossible: yet haply of thy race 501
In future days, if malice should abound,
Some one intent on mischief, or inspir'd
With dev'lish machination, might devise
Like instrument to plague the sons of men 505
For sin, on war and mutual slaughter bent.
Forthwith from council to the work they flew;
None arguing stood; innumerable hands
Were ready; in a moment up they turn'd
Wide the celestial soil, and saw beneath 510
Th' originals of nature in their crude
Conception; sulphurous and nitrous foam
They found, they mingled, and with subtile art,
Concocted and adusted they reduc'd
To blackest grain, and into store convey'd: 515
Part hidden veins digg'd up (nor hath this earth
Entrails unlike) of mineral and stone,
Whereof to found their engines and their balls
Of missive ruin; part incentive reed
Provide, pernicious with one touch to fire. 520
So all ere day-spring, under conscious night,
Secret they finish'd, and in order set,
With silent circumspection unespied.

Now when fair morn orient in Heav'n appear'd,
Up rose the victor angels, and to arms 525
The matin trumpet sung: in arms they stood
Of golden panoply, refulgent host,
Soon banded; others from the dawning hills
Look'd round, and scouts each coast light-armed scour,
Each quarter to descry, the distant foe, 530
Where lodg'd, or whither fled, or if for fight,
In motion or in halt: him soon they met
Under spread ensigns moving nigh, in flow
But firm battalion; back with speediest sail
Zophiel, of cherubim the swiftest wing, 535
Came fly'ng, and in mid air aloud thus cry'd.

Arm, warriors, arm for fight; the foe at hand,
Whom fled we thought, will save us long pursuit
This day; fear not his flight; so thick a cloud
He comes, and settled in his face I see 540
Sad resolution and secure; let each
His adamantine coat gird well, and each

Fit well his helm, gripe fast his orbed shield,
 Borne ev'n on high ; for this day will pour down,
 If I conjecture aught, no drizzling show'r, 545
 But rattling storm of arrows barb'd with fire.

So warn'd he them, aware themselves, and soon
 In order, quit of all impediment ;
 Instant without disturb they took alarm,
 And onward move embattel'd: when behold 550
 Not distant far with heavy pace the foe
 Approaching gross and huge, in hollow cube
 Training his devilish engin'ry, impal'd
 On every side with shadowing squadrons deep,
 To hide the fraud. At interview both stood 555
 A while ; but suddenly at head appear'd
 Satan, and thus was heard commanding loud.

Vanguard, to right and left the front unfold ;
 That all may see who hate us, how we seek
 Peace and composure, and with open breast 560
 Stand ready to receive them, if they like
 Our overture, and turn not back perverse ;
 But that I doubt ; however witness Heav'n,
 Heav'n witness thou anon, while we discharge
 Freely our part ; ye who appointed stand, 565
 Do as you have in charge, and briefly touch
 What we propound, and loud that all may hear.

So scoffing in ambiguous words, he scarce
 Had ended ; when to right and left the front
 Divided, and to either flank retir'd : 570
 Which to our eyes discover'd, new and strange,
 A triple mounted row of pillars laid
 On wheels (for like to pillars most they seem'd,
 Or hollow'd bodies made of oak or fir
 With branches lopt, in wood or mountain fell'd) 575
 Brass, iron, stony mold, had not their mouths
 With hideous orifice gap'd on us wide,
 Portending hollow truce : at each behind
 A seraph stood, and in his hand a reed
 Stood waving tipt with fire ; while we suspense 580
 Collected stood within our thoughts amus'd,
 Not long, for sudden all at once their reeds
 Put forth, and to a narrow vent apply'd
 With nicest touch. Immediate in a flame,
 But soon obscur'd with smoke, all Heav'n appear'd 585

From those deep-throated engines belch'd, whose roar
Imbowl'd with outrageous noise the air,
And all her entrails tore, disgorging foul
Their devilish glut, chain'd thunder bolt and hail
Of iron globes; which on the victor host 590
Levell'd, with such impetuous fury smote,
That whom they hit, none on their feet might stand,
Though standing else as rocks, but down they fell
By thousands, angel on arch-angel roll'd;
The sooner for their arms; unarm'd they might 595
Have easily, as sp'rits, evaded swift
By quick contraction or remove; but now
Foul dissipation follow'd and forc'd rout;
Nor serv'd it to relax their ferried files.
What should they do? if on they rush'd, repulse 600
Repeated, and indecent overthrow
Doubled, would render them yet more despis'd,
And to their foes a laughter: for in view
Stood rank'd of seraphim another row,
In posture to desplode their second tire 605
Of thunder: back defeated to return
They worse abhorr'd. Satan beheld their plight,
And to his mates thus in derision call'd.

O friends, why come not on these victors proud?
Ere while they fierce were coming; and when we, 610
To entertain them fair with open front
And breast (what could we more?) propounded terms
Of composition, strait they chang'd their minds,
Flew off, and into strange vagaries fell,
As they would dance; yet for a dance they seem'd
Somewhat extravagant and wild, perhaps 615
For joy of offer'd peace: but I suppose,
If our proposals once again were heard,
We should compel them to a quick result.

To whom thus Belial in like gamesome mood. 620
Leader, the terms we sent were terms of weight,
Of hard contents, and full of force urg'd home,
Such as we might perceive amus'd them all,
And stumbled many; who receives them right,
Had need from head to foot well understand; 625
Not understood, this gift they have besides,
They show us when our foes walk not upright.

So they among themselves in pleasant vein

Stood scoffing, heighten'd in their thoughts beyond
All doubt of victory ; eternal might 630
To match with their inventions they presum'd
So easy, and of his thunder made a scorn,
And all his host derided, while they stood
A while in trouble : but they stood not long ;
Rage prompted them at length, and found them arms
Against such hellish mischief fit to oppose. 636
Forthwith (behold the excellence, the pow'r
Which God hath in his mighty angels plac'd)
Their arms away they threw, and to the hills
(For earth hath this variety from Heav'n 640
Of pleasure situate in hill and dale)
Light as the lightning glimpse they ran, they flew ;
From their foundations loos'ning too and fro
They pluck'd the seated hills with all their load,
Rocks, waters, woods, and by the shaggy tops 645
Uplifting bore them in their hands : amaze,
Be sure, and terror, seiz'd the rebel host,
When coming towards them so dread they saw
The bottom of the mountains upward turn'd ;
Till on these cursed engines triple row 650
They saw them whelm'd, and all their confidence
Under the weight of mountains buried deep ;
Themselves invaded next, and on their heads
Main promontories flung, which in the air 654
Came shadowing, and oppress'd whole legions arm'd ;
Their armour help'd their harm, crush'd in and bruis'd
Into their substance pent, which wrought them pain
Implacable, and many a dolorous groan,
Long struggling underneath, ere they could wind
Out of such prison, though sp'rits of purest light, 560
Purest at first, now gross by sinning grown.
The rest, in imitation, to like arms
Betook them, and the neighb'ring hills uptore ;
So hills amid the air encounter'd hills
Hurl'd to and fro with jaculation dire, 665
That under ground they fought in dismal shade ;
Infernal noise ; war seem'd a civil game
To this uproar ; horrid confusion heap'd
Upon confusion rose : and now all Heav'n
Had gone to wreck, with ruin overspread ; 670
Had not the almighty Father, where he sits

Shrin'd in his sanctuary of Heav'n secure,
Consulting on the sum of things, foreseen
This tumult, and permitted all, advis'd :
That his great purpose he might so fulfil, 675
To honour his anointed Son aveng'd
Upon his enemies, and to declare
All pow'r on him transferr'd : whence to his Son,
Th' assessor of his throne, he thus began.

Effulgence of my glory, Son belov'd, 680
Son in whose face invisible is beheld
Visibly, what by deity I am,
And in whose hand what by decree I do,
Second Omnipotence, two days are past,
Two days, as we compute the days of Heav'n, 685
Since Michael and his pow'rs went forth to tame
These disobedient : fore hath been their fight,
As likeliest was, when two such foes met arm'd ;
For to themselves I left them, and thou know'st,
Equal in their creation they were form'd, 690
Save what sin hath impair'd, which yet hath wrought
Insensibly, for I suspend their doom ;
Whence in perpetual fight they needs must last
Endless, and no solution will be found :

War wearied hath perform'd what war can do, 695
And to disorder'd rage let loose the reins,
With mountains as with weapons arm'd ; which makes
Wild work in Heav'n, and dang'rous to the main.
Two days are therefore past, the third is thine ;
For thee I have ordain'd it, and thus far 700
Have suffer'd, that the glory may be thine
Of ending this great war, since none but thou
Can end it. Into thee such virtue and grace
Immense I have transfus'd, that all may know
In Heav'n and Hell thy pow'r above compare ; 705
And this perverse commotion govern'd thus,
To manifest thee worthiest to be heir
Of all things, to be heir and to be King,
By sacred unction, thy deserved right.

Go then, thou mightiest in thy Father's might, 710
Ascend my chariot, guide the rapid wheels
That shake Heav'n's basis, bring forth all my war,
My bow and thunder, my almighty arms
Gird on, and sword upon thy puissant thigh ;

Pursue these sons of darkness, drive them out 715
From all Heav'n's bounds into the utter deep ;
There let them learn, as likes them, to despise
God and Messiah his anointed King.

He said, and on his Son with rays direct
Shone full ; he all his Father full express'd 720
Ineffably into his face receiv'd ;
And thus the filial Godhead answ'ring spake.

O Father, O supreme of heav'nly thrones,
First, Highest, Holiest, Best, thou always seek'st
To glorify thy Son, I always thee, 725
As is most just : this I my glory account,
My exaltation, and my whole delight,
That thou in me well pleas'd, declar'st thy will
Fulfill'd, which to fulfil is all my bliss.

Scepter and pow'r, thy giving, I assume, 730
And gladlier shall resign, when in the end
Thou shalt be all in all, and I in thee
For ever, and in me all whom thou lov'st :
But whom thou hat'st, I hate, and can put on
Thy terrors, as I put thy mildness on, 735
Image of thee in all things ; and shall soon,
Arm'd with thy might, rid Heav'n of these rebell'd,
To their prepar'd ill mansion driven down,
To chains and darkness, and th' undying worm,
That from thy just obedience could revolt, 740
Whom to obey is happiness entire.

Than shall thy saints unmix'd, and from th' impure
Far separate, circling thy holy mount
Unfeigned halleluiahs to thee sing,
Hymns of high praise, and I among them chief. 745

So said, he o'er his scepter bowing, rose
From the right hand of glory where he sat ;
And the third sacred morn began to shine, [found
Dawning thro' Heav'n ; forth rush'd with whirlwind
The chariot of Paternal Deity, 750
Flashing thick flames, wheel within wheel undrawn,
Itself instinct with spirit, but convoy'd
By four cherubic shapes ; four faces each
Had wondrous ; as with stars, their bodies all,
And wings, were set with eyes, with eyes the wheels 755
Of beryl, and careering fires between ;
Over their heads a crystal firmament,

Whereon a saphir throne, inlaid with pure
Amber, and colours of the show'ry arch.
He in celestial panoply all arm'd 760
Of radiant Urim, work divinely wrought,
Ascended; at his right hand Victory
Sat eagle-wing'd; beside him hung his bow
And quiver with three-bolted thunder stor'd,
And from about him fierce effusion roll'd 765
Of smock, and bick'ring flame, and sparkles dire.
Attended with ten thousand thousand saints
He onward came; far off his coming shone;
And twenty thousand (I their number heard)
Chariots of God, half on each hand were seen. 770
He on the wings of cherub rode sublime
On the crystallin sky, in saphir thron'd,
Illustrious far and wide; but by his own
First seen: then unexpected joy surpriz'd,
When the great ensign of Messiah blaz'd 775
Aloft by angels borne, his sign in Heav'n;
Under whose conduct Michael soon reduc'd
His army circumfus'd on either wing,
Under their head embodied all in one.
Before him pow'r divine his way prepar'd; 780
At his command th' uprooted hills retir'd
Each to his place; they heard his voice, and went
Obsequious; Heav'n his wonted face renew'd,
And with fresh flow'rets hill and valley smil'd.
This saw his hapless foes, but stood obdur'd, 785
And to rebellious fight rallied their powers
Insensate, hope conceiving from despair.
In heav'nly sp'rits could such perverseness dwell?
But to convince the proud what signs avail,
Or wonders move th' obdurate to relent? 790
They harden'd more by what might most reclaim,
Grieving to see his glory, at the sight
Took envy; and aspiring to his hight,
Stood re-embattl'd fierce, by force or fraud
Weening to prosper, and at length prevail 795
Against God and Messiah, or to fall
In universal ruin last; and now
To final battle drew, disdaining flight
Or faint retreat: when the great Son of God
To all his host on either hand thus spake. 800

Stand still in bright array, ye faints, here stand,
Ye angels arm'd, this day from battle rest;
Faithful hath been your warfare, and of God
Accepted, fearless in his righteous cause;
And as ye have receiv'd, so have ye done 805
Invincibly; but of this cursed crew
The punishment to other hand belongs;
Vengeance is his, or whose he sole appoints:
Number to this day's work is not ordain'd,
Nor multitude; stand only and behold 810
God's indignation on these godless pour'd
By me; not you, but me they have despis'd,
Yet envied; against me is all their rage,
Because the Father, t' whom in Heav'n supreme
Kingdom, and pow'r, and glory appertains, 815
Hath honour'd me according to his will.
Therefore to me their doom he hath assign'd;
That they may have their wish, to try with me
In battle which the stronger proves, they all,
Or I alone against them; since by strength 820
They measure all, of other excellence
Not emulous, nor care who them excels;
Nor other strife with them do I vouchsafe.

So spake the Son, and into terror chang'd
His count'nance too severe to be beheld, 825
And full of wrath bent on his enemies.
At once the Four spread out the starry wings
With dreadful shade contiguous, and the orbs
Of his fierce chariot roll'd, as with the sound
Of torrent floods, or of a numerous host. 830
He on his impious foes right onward drove,
Gloomy as night; under his burning wheels
The steadfast empyrean shook throughout,
All but the throne itself of God. Full soon
Among them he arriv'd, in his right hand 835
Grasping ten thousand thunders, which he sent
Before him, such as in their souls infix'd
Plagues: they astonish'd all resistance lost,
All courage; down their idle weapons dropt;
O'er shields, and helms, and helmed heads he rode 840
Of thrones and mighty seraphim prostrate,
That wish'd the mountains now might be again
Thrown on them, as a shelter from his ire.

Nor less on either side tempestuous fell
His arrows, from the fourfold-visag'd Four 845
Distinct with eyes, and from the living wheels
Distinct alike with multitude of eyes;
One spirit in them rul'd, and every eye
Glar'd lightning, and shot forth pernicious fire
Amongst' accurs'd, that wither'd all their strength, 850
And of their wonted vigour left them drain'd,
Exhausted, spiritless, afflicted, fall'n.
Yet half his strength he put not forth, but check'd
His thunder in mid volley; for he meant
Not to destroy, but root them out of Heav'n: 855
The overthrown he rais'd, and as a herd
Of goats or tim'rous flock together throng'd,
Drove them before him thunder-struck, pursu'd
With terrors and with furies to the bounds
And crystal wall of Heav'n; which op'ning wide 860
Roll'd inward, and a spacious gap disclos'd
Into the wasteful deep; the monstrous fight
Struck them with horror backward, but far worse
Urg'd them behind: headlong themselves they threw
Down from the verge of Heav'n; eternal wrath 865
Burnt after them to the bottomless pit.
Hell heard th' insufferable noise, Hell saw
Heav'n ruining from Heav'n, and would have fled
Affrighted; but strict fate had cast too deep
Her dark foundations, and too fast had bound. 870
Nine days they fell; confounded Chaos roar'd,
And felt tenfold confusion in their fall
Through his wild anarchy, so huge a rout
Incumber'd him with ruin: Hell at last
Yawning receiv'd them whole, and on them clos'd; 875
Hell, their fit habitation, fraught with fire
Unquenchable, the house of woe and pain.
Disburden'd Heav'n rejoic'd, and soon repair'd
Her mural breach, returning whence it roll'd.
Sole victor from th' expulsion of his foes 880
Messiah his triumphal chariot turn'd;
To meet him all his saints, who silent stood
Eye-witnesses of his almighty acts,
With jubilee advanc'd; and as they went,
Shaded with branching palm, each order bright, 885
Sung triumph, and him sung victorious King,

Son, Heir, and Lord, to him dominion giv'n,
Worthiest to reign : he celebrated rode
Triumphant through mid Heav'n, into the courts
And temple of his mighty Father thron'd 890
On high ; who into glory him receiv'd,
Where now he sits at the right hand of blifs.

Thus measuring things in Heav'n by things on earth,
At thy request, and that thou may'st beware
By what is past, to thee I have reveal'd 895
What might have else to human race been hid ;
The discord which beset, and war in Heav'n
Among th' angelic pow'rs, and the deep fall
Of those too high aspiring, who rebell'd
With Satan ; he who envies now thy state, 900
Who now is plotting how he may seduce
Thee also from obedience, that, with him
Bereav'd of happiness, thou may'st partake
His punishment, eternal misery ;
Which would be all his solace and revenge, 905
As a despite done against the Most High,
Thee once to gain companion of his woe.
But listen not to his temptations, warn
Thy weaker ; let it profit thee to have heard,
By terrible example the reward 910
Of disobedience ; firm they might have stood,
Yet fell ; remember, and fear to transgress.

End of the Sixth Book.

THE PARADISE

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK VII.

THE ARGUMENT.

Raphael, at the request of Adam, relates how and wherefore this world was first created; that God, after the expelling of Satan and his angels out of Heaven, declared his pleasure to create another world, and other creatures to dwell therein; sends his Son with glory and attendance of angels to perform the work of creation in six days: the angels celebrate with hymns the performance thereof, and his re-ascension into Heaven.

PARADISE LOST.

B O O K VII

DESCEND from Heav'n, Urania, by that name
If rightly thou art call'd, whose voice divine
Following, above th' Olympian hill I soar,
Above the flight of Pegasean wing,
The meaning, not the name, I call : for thou 5
Nor of the Muses nine, nor on the top
Of old Olympus dwell'st ; but heav'nly born,
Before the hills appear'd, or fountain flow'd,
Thou with eternal Wisdom didst converse,
Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play 10
In presence of th' almighty Father, pleas'd
With thy celestial song. Up led by thee
Into the Heav'n of Heav'ns I have presum'd,
An earthly guest, and drawn empyreal air,
Thy temp'ring ; with like safety guided down, 15
Return me to my native element :
Lest from this flying steed unrein'd (as once
Bellerophon, though from a lower clime)
Dismounted, on th' Aleian field I fall,
Erroneous there to wander and forlorn. 20
Half yet remains unsung, but narrower bound
Within the visible diurnal sphere ;
Standing on earth, not rapt above the pole,
More safe I sing with mortal voice, unchang'd
To hoarse or mute, though fall'n on evil days, 25
On evil days though fall'n, and evil tongues ;
In darkness and with dangers compass'd round,

And solitude ; yet not alone, while thou
Visit'st my slumbers nightly, or when morn
Purples the east : still govern thou my song, 30
Urania, and fit audience find, though few ;
But drive far off the barbarous dissonance
Of Bacchus and his revellers, the race
Of that wild rout that tore the Thracian bard
In Rhodope, where woods and rocks had ears 35
To rapture, till the savage clamour drown'd
Both harp and voice ; nor could the Muse defend
Her son. So fail not thou, who thee implores :
For thou art heav'nly, she an empty dream.
Say, goddess, what ensued when Raphael, 40
The affable arch-angel, had forewarn'd
Adam by dire example to beware
Apostasy, by what befel in Heav'n
To those apostates, lest the like befal
In Paradise to Adam or his race, 45
Charg'd not to touch the interdicted tree,
If they transgress, and slight that sole command,
So easily obey'd amid the choice
Of all tastes else to please their appetite,
Though wand'ring. He with his consoled Eve 50
The story heard attentive, and was fill'd
With admiration and deep muse, to hear
Of things so high and strange, things to their thought
So unimaginable as hate in Heav'n,
And war so near the peace of God in bliss, 55
With such confusion : but the evil soon
Driv'n back redounded as a flood on those
From whom it sprung, impossible to mix
With blessedness. Whence Adam soon repeal'd
The doubts that in his heart arose : and now 60
Led on, yet sinless, with desire to know
What nearer might concern him, how this world
Of Heav'n and Earth conspicuous first began,
When, and whereof created, for what cause,
What within Eden or without was done 65
Before his memory, as one whose drowth
Yet scarce allay'd still eyes the current stream,
Whose liquid murmur heard new thirst excites,
Proceeded thus to ask his heav'nly guest.
Great things, and full of wonder in our ears, 70

Far differing from this world, thou hast reveal'd,
Divine interpreter, by favour sent
Down from the empyrean to forewarn
Us timely of what might else have been our loss
Unknown, which human knowledge could not reach: 75
For which to th' infinitely Good we owe
Immortal thanks, and his admonishment
Receive with solemn purpose to observe
Immutably his sov'reign will, the end
Of what we are. But since thou hast vouchsaf'd 80
Gently for our instruction to impart
Things above earthly thought, which yet concern'd
Our knowing, as to highest wisdom seem'd,
Deign to descend now lower, and relate
What may no less perhaps avail us known, 85
How first began this Heav'n, which we behold
Distant so high, with moving fires adorn'd
Innumerable, and this which yields or fills
All space, the ambient air wide interfus'd
Embracing round this florid earth; what cause 90
Mov'd the Creator in his holy rest,
Through all eternity so late to build
In chaos; and the work begun, how soon
Absolv'd; if unforbid thou may'st unfold
What we, not to explore the secrets ask 95
Of his eternal empire, but the more
To magnify his works, the more we know.
And the great light of day yet wants to run
Much of his race, though steep; suspense in Heav'n,
Held by thy voice, thy potent voice, he hears, 100
'And longer will delay to hear thee tell
His generation, and the rising birth
Of nature from the unapparent deep:
Or if the star of evening and the moon
Haste to thy audience, night with her will bring 105
Silence, and sleep list'ning to thee will watch;
Or we can bid his absence, till thy song
End, and dismiss thee ere the morning shine.

Thus Adam his illustrious guest besought;
And thus the godlike angel answer'd mild. 110

This also thy request with caution ask'd
Obtain: though to recount almighty works
What words or tongue of seraph can suffice,

Or heart of man suffice to comprehend?
 Yet what thou canst attain, which best may serve 115
 To glorify the Maker, and infer
 Thee also happier, shall not be with-held
 Thy hearing, such commission from above
 I have receiv'd, to answer thy desire
 Of knowledge within bounds; beyond abstain 120
 To ask, nor let thine own inventions hope
 Things not reveal'd, which th' invisible King,
 Only omniscient, hath suppress'd in night,
 To none communicable on earth or Heav'n:
 Enough is left besides to search and know. 125
 But knowledge is as food, and needs no less
 Her temp'rance over appetite, to know
 In measure what the mind may well contain;
 Oppresses else with surfeit, and soon turns
 Wisdom to folly, as nourishment to wind. 130

Know then, that after Lucifer from Heav'n
 (So call him, brighter once amidst the host
 Of angels, than that star the stars among)
 Fell with his flaming legions through the deep
 Into his place, and the great Son return'd 135
 Victorious with his saints, th' omnipotent
 Eternal Father from his throne beheld
 Their multitude, and to his Son thus spake.

At least our envious foe hath fail'd, who thought
 All like himself rebellious, by whose aid 140
 This inaccessible high strength, the seat
 Of deity supreme, us dispossest'd,
 He trusted to have seiz'd, and into fraud
 Drew many, whom their place knows here no more;
 Yet far the greater part have kept, I see, 145
 Their station, Heav'n yet populous retains
 Number sufficient to possess her realms
 Though wide, and this high temple to frequent
 With ministeries due and solemn rites:
 But lest his heart exult him in the harm 150
 Already done, to have dispeopled Heav'n,
 My damage fondly deem'd, I can repair
 That detriment, if such it be, to lose
 Self-lost, and in a moment will create
 Another world, out of one man a race 155
 Of men innumerable, there to dwell,

Not here, till, by degrees of merit rais'd,
They open to themselves at length the way
Up hither, under long obedience try'd, 160
And earth be chang'd to Heav'n, and Heav'n to earth,
One kingdom, joy and union without end.
Mean while inhabit lax, ye pow'rs of Heav'n,
And thou my Word, begotten Son, by thee
This I perform; speak thou, and be it done:
My overshadowing Sp'rit and might with thee 165
I send along; ride forth, and bid the deep
Within appointed bounds be Heav'n and earth,
Boundless the deep, because I am who fill
Infinitude, nor vacuous the space,
Though I uncircumscrib'd myself retire, 170
And put not forth my goodness, which is free
To act or not, necessity and chance
Approach not me, and what I will is fate.

So spake th' Almighty, and to what he spake
His Word, the filial Godhead, gave effect. 175
Immediate are the acts of God, more swift
Than time or motion; but to human ears
Cannot without process of speech be told,
So told as earthly notion can receive.
Great triumph and rejoicing was in Heav'n, 180
When such was heard declar'd th' Almighty's will:
Glory they sung to the Most High, good-will
To future men, and in their dwellings peace:
Glory to him, whose just avenging ire
Had driv'n out th' ungodly from his sight 185
And th' habitations of the just; to him
Glory and praise, whose wisdom had ordain'd
Good out of evil, to create, instead
Of sp'rits malign, a better race to bring
Into their vacant room, and thence diffuse 190
His good to worlds and ages infinite.

So sang the hierarchies: mean while the Son
On his great expedition now appear'd,
Girt with omnipotence, with radiance crown'd
Of majesty divine; sapience and love 195
Immense, and all his Father in him shone.
About his chariot numberless were pour'd
Cherub and seraph, potentates and thrones,
And virtues, winged sp'rits, and chariots wing'd

From th' armoury of God, where stand of old 200
Myriads between two brazen mountains lodg'd
Against a solemn day, harness'd at hand,
Celestial equipage; and now came forth
Spontaneous, for within them spirit liv'd,
Attendant on their Lord: Heav'n open'd wide 205
Her ever-during gates, harmonious found
On golden hinges moving, to let forth
The King of Glory in his pow'rful Word
And Spirit coming to create new worlds.
On heav'nly ground they stood, and from the shore 210
They view'd the vast immeasurable abyfs
Outrageous as a sea, dark, wasteful, wild,
Up from the bottom turn'd by furious winds
And surging waves, as mountains, to assault
Heav'n's highth, and with the center mix the pole. 215
Silence, ye troubled waves, and thou deep, peace;
Said then th' omnific Word, your discord end:
Nor stay'd, but on the wings of cherubim
Uplifted, in paternal glory rode
Far into Chaos, and the world unborn; 220
For Chaos heard his voice: him all his train
Follow'd in bright procession, to behold
Creation, and the wonders of his might.
Then stay'd the fervid wheels, and in his hand
He took the golden compasses, prepar'd 225
In God's eternal store, to circumscribe
This universe, and all created things:
One foot he center'd, and the other turn'd
Round through the vast profundity obscure,
And said, Thus far extend, thus far thy bounds, 230
This be thy just circumference, O world.
Thus God the Heav'n created, thus the earth,
Matter unform'd and void: darkness profound
Cover'd th' abyfs: but on the watry calm
His brooding wings the Sp'rit of God outspread, 235
And vital virtue infus'd, and vital warmth
Throughout the fluid mass; but downward purg'd
The black tartareous cold infernal dregs
Adverse to life: then founded, then conglob'd
Like things to like, the rest to several place 240
Disparted, and between spun out the air,
And earth self-balanc'd on her center hung,

Let there be light, said God, and forthwith light
Ethereal, first of things, quintessence pure,
Sprung from the deep, and from her native east 245
To journey through the airy gloom began,
Spher'd in a radiant cloud; for yet the sun
Was not; she in a cloudy tabernacle
Sojourn'd the while. God saw the light was good;
And light from darkness by the hemisphere 250
Divided: light the Day, and darkness Night
He nam'd. Thus was the first day ev'n and morn:
Nor past uncelebrated, nor unsung
By the celestial quires, when orient light
Exhaling first from darkness they beheld; 255
Birth-day of Heav'n and earth; with joy and shout
The hollow universal orb they fill'd,
And touch'd their golden harps, and hymning prais'd
God and his works, Creator him they sung,
Both when first evening was, and when first morn. 260

Again, God said, Let there be firmament
Amid the waters, and let it divide
The waters from the waters: and God made
The firmament, expanse of liquid, pure,
Transparent, elemental air, diffus'd 265
In circuit to the uttermost convex
Of this great round: partition firm and sure,
The waters underneath from those above
Dividing: for as earth, so he the world
Built on circumfluous waters calm, in wide 270
Crystallian ocean, and the loud misrule
Of Chaos far remov'd, lest fierce extremes
Contiguous might distemper the whole frame:
And Heav'n he nam'd the Firmament: So even
And morning chorus sung the second day. 275

The earth was form'd, but in the womb as yet
Of waters, embryon immature involv'd,
Appear'd not: over all the face of earth
Main ocean flow'd, not idle, but with warm
Prolific humour soft'ning all her globe, 280
Fermented the great mother to conceive,
Sate with genial moisture, when God said,
Be gather'd now ye waters under Heav'n
Into one place, and let dry land appear.
Immediately the mountains huge appear 285
Emergent, and their broad bare backs upheave

Into the clouds, their tops ascend the sky :
So high as heav'd the tumid hills, so low
Down sunk a hollow bottom broad and deep,
Capacious bed of waters : thither they 290
Hasted with glad precipitance, uproll'd
As drops on dust conglobing from the dry ;
Part rise in crystal wall, or ridge direct,
For haste ; such flight the great command impress'd
On the swift floods : as armies at the call 295
Of trumpet (for of armies thou hast heard)
Troop to their standard, so the watry throng,
Wave rolling after wave, where way they found,
If steep, with torrent rapture, if through plain,
Soft ebbing ; nor withstood them rock or hill, 300
But they, or under ground, or circuit wide
With serpent error wand'ring, found their way,
And on the washy ooze deep channels wore ;
Easy, ere God had bid the ground be dry,
All but within those banks, where rivers now 305
Stream, and perpetual draw their humid train.
The dry land, Earth, and the great receptacle
Of congregated waters he call'd Seas :
And saw that it was good, and said, let th' earth
Put forth the verdent grass, herb yielding feed, 310
And fruit-tree yielding fruit after her kind,
Whose seed is in herself upon the earth.
He scarce had said, when the bare earth, till then
Desert and bare, unsightly, unadorn'd,
Brought forth the tender grass, whose verdure clad 315
Her universal face with pleasant green ;
Then herbs of every leaf, that sudden flow'r'd
Opening their various colours, and made gay
Her bosom smelling sweet : and these scarce blown,
Forth flourish'd thick the clust'ring vine, forth crept 320
The smelling gourd, up stood the corney reed
Imbattel'd in her field ; and th' humble shrub,
And bush with frizzled hair implicit : last
Rose as in dance the stately trees, and spread
Their branches hung with copious fruit, or gemm'd 325
Their blossoms : with high woods the hills were crown'd,
With tufts the valleys, and each fountain side,
With borders long the rivers : that earth now
Seem'd like to Heav'n, a seat where gods might dwell,

Or wander with delight, and love to haunt 330
Her sacred shades: though God had yet not rain'd
Upon the earth, and man to till the ground
None was, but from the earth a dewy mist
Went up and water'd all the ground, and each
Plant of the field, which ere it was in th' earth 335
God made, and every herb, before it grew
On the green stem; God saw that it was good:
So ev'n and morn recorded the third day.

Again th' Almighty spake, Let there be lights
High in th' expanse of Heav'n, to divide 340
The day from night; and let them be for signs,
For seasons, and for days, and circling years;
And let them be for lights, as I ordain
Their office in the firmament of Heav'n,
To give light on the earth; and it was so. 345
And God made two great lights, great for their use
To man, the greater to have rule by day,
The less by night altern: and made the stars,
And set them in the firmament of Heav'n,
To illuminate the earth, and rule the day 350
In their vicissitude, and rule the night,
And light from darkness to divide. God saw,
Surveying his great work, that it was good:
For of celestial bodies first the sun
A mighty sphere he fram'd, unlightsome first, 355
Though of ethereal mold: then form'd the moon
Globose, and every magnitude of stars,
And sow'd with stars the Heav'n thick as a field:
Of light by far the greater part he took
Transplanted from her cloudy shrine, and plac'd 360
In the sun's orb, made porous to receive
And drink the liquid light, firm to retain
Her gather'd beams, great palace now of light.
Hither, as to their fountain, other stars
Repairing, in their golden urns draw light, 365
And hence the morning planet gilds her horns;
By tincture or reflection they augment
Their small peculiar, though from human sight
So far remote, with diminution seen.
First in his east the glorious lamp was seen, 370
Regent of day, and all th' horizon round
Invested with bright rays, jocund to run

His longitude through Heav'n's high road; the gray
Dawn, and the Pleiades before him danc'd,
Shedding sweet influence: less bright the moon, 375
But opposite in levell'd west was set,
His mirror, with full face borrowing her light
From him; for other light she needed none
In that aspect; and still that distance keeps
Till night, then in the east her turn she shines, 380
Revolv'd on Heav'n's great axle, and her reign
With thousand lesser lights dividual holds,
With thousand thousand stars, that then appear'd
Spangling the hemisphere: then first adorn'd
With their bright luminaries that set and rose, 385
Glad evening and glad morn crown'd the fourth day.

And God said, Let the waters generate,
Reptile with spawn abundant, living soul:
And let fowl fly above the earth, with wings
Display'd on th' open firmament of Heav'n. 390
And God created the great whales, and each
Soul living, each that crept, which plenteously
The waters generated by their kinds;
And every bird of wing after his kind;
And saw that it was good, and bless'd them, saying, 395
Be fruitful, multiply, and in the seas,
And lakes, and running streams, the waters fill;
And let the fowl be multiply'd on th' earth.
Forthwith the sounds and seas, each creek and bay,
With fry innumerable swarm, and shoals 400
Of fish, that with their fins and shining scales
Glide under the green wave, in sculls that oft
Bank the mid sea: part single or with mate
Graze the sea-weed their pasture, and through groves
Of coral stray, or sporting with quick glance 405
Show to the sun their wav'd cots dropt with gold;
Or in their pearly shells at ease, attend
Moist nutriment; or under rocks their food
In jointed armour watch: on smooth the seal,
And bended dolphins play: part huge of bulk 410
Wallowing unwieldy, enormous in their gait,
Tempest the ocean: there Leviathan,
Hugest of living creatures, on the deep
Stretch'd like a promontory, sleeps or swims,
And seems a moving land, and at his gills 415

Draws in, and at his trunk spouts out a sea.
Mean while the tepid caves, and fens, and shores,
Their brood as numerous hatch, from th' egg that soon
Bursting with kindly rupture forth disclos'd
Their callow young, but feather'd soon and fledge 420
They summ'd their pens, and soaring th' air sublime
With clang despis'd the ground, under a cloud
In prospect; there the eagle and the stork
On cliffs and cedar-tops their eyries build:
Part loosely wing the region, part more wise 425
In common, rang'd in figure wedge their way
Intelligent of seasons, and set forth
Their airy caravan high over seas
Flying, and over lands with mutual wing
Easing their flight; so steers the prudent crane 430
Her annual voyage, borne on winds; the air
Floats as they pass, fann'd with unnumber'd plumes:
From branch to branch the smaller birds with song
Solac'd the woods, and spread their painted wings
Till ev'n; nor then the solemn nightingale 435
Ceas'd warbling, but all night tun'd her soft lays:
Others on silver lakes and rivers bath'd
Their downy breast; the swan with arched neck
Between her white wings mantling proudly rows
Her state with oary feet; yet oft they quit 440
The dank, and rising on stiff pennons, tower
The mid aerial sky: others on ground
Walk'd firm; the crested cock, whose clarion sounds
The silent hours, and th' other whose gay train
Adorns him, colour'd with the florid hue 445
Of rainbows and starry eyes. The waters thus
With fish replenish'd, and the air with fowl,
Ev'ning and morning solemniz'd the fifth day.

The sixth, and of creation last, arose
With evening harps and matin, when God said, 450
Let th' earth bring forth soul living in her kind,
Cattle and creeping things, and beast of th' earth,
Each in their kind. The earth obey'd, and strait
Op'ning her fertile womb teem'd at a birth
Innumerable living creatures, perfect forms, 456
Limb'd and full grown: out of the ground up rose
As from his lair, the wild beast where he wons
In forest wild, in thicket, brake, or den;

Among the trees in pairs they rose, they walk'd ;
 The cattle in the fields and meadows green : 460
 Those rare and solitary, these in flocks
 Pasturing at once, and in broad herds upsprung.
 The grassy clods now calv'd, now half appear'd
 The tawny lion, pawing to get free
 His hinder parts, then springs as broke from bonds, 465
 And rampant shakes his brinded mane ; the ounce,
 The libbard, and the tiger, as the mole
 Rising, the crumbled earth above them threw
 In hillocks : the swift stag from under ground
 Bore up his branching head : scarce from his mold 470
 Behemoth, biggest born of earth, upheav'd
 His vastness : fleec'd the flocks and bleating rose,
 As plants : ambiguous between sea and land
 The river horse and scaly crocodile.
 At once came forth whatever creeps the ground, 475
 Insect or worm : those wav'd their limber fans
 For wings, and smallest lineaments exact
 In all the liveries deck'd of summer's pride,
 With spots of gold and purple, azure and green :
 These as a line their long dimension drew, 480
 Streaking the ground with sinuous trace ; not all
 Minims of nature ; some of serpent-kind,
 Wondrous in length and corpulence, involv'd
 Their snaky folds, and added wings. First crept
 The parsimonious emmet, provident 485
 Of future, in small room large heart inclos'd,
 Pattern of just equality perhaps
 Hereafter, join'd in her popular tribes
 Of commonalty : swarming next appear'd
 The female bee, that feeds her husband drone 490
 Deliciously, and builds her waxen cells
 With honey stor'd : the rest are numberless,
 And thou their natures know'st, and gave them names,
 Needless to thee repeated ; nor unknown
 The serpent, subtlest beast of all the field, 495
 Of huge extent sometimes, with brazen eyes
 And hairy mane terrific, though to thee
 Not noxious, but obedient at thy call.
 Now Heav'n in all her glory shone, and roll'd
 Her motions as the great first Mover's hand 500
 First wheel'd their course ; earth in her rich attire
 Consummate lovely finil'd ; air, water, earth,

By fowl, fish, beast, was flown, was swum, was walk'd
Frequent; and of the sixth day yet remain'd;
There wanted yet the master-work, the end 505
Of all yet done; a creature who not prone
And brute as other creatures, but endu'd
With sanctity of reason, might erect
His stature, and upright with front serene
Govern the rest, self-knowing, and from thence 510
Magnanimous to correspond with Heav'n,
But grateful to acknowledge whence his good
Descends, thither with heart, and voice, and eyes
Directed in devotion, to adore
And worship God supreme, who made him chief 515
Of all his works: therefore th' Omnipotent
Eternal Father (for where is not he
Present?) thus to his Son audibly spake.

Let us make now man in our image, man
In our similitude, and let them rule 520
Over the fish and fowl of sea and air,
Beast of the field, and over all the earth,
And every creeping thing that creeps the ground.
This said, he form'd thee, Adam, thee, O man,
Dust of the ground, and in thy nostrils breath'd 525
The breath of life; in his own image he
Created thee, in the image of God
Express, and thou becam'st a living soul.
Male he created thee, but thy consort
Female for race; then bless'd mankind, and said, 530
Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth,
Subdue it, and throughout dominion hold
Over fish of the sea, and fowl of th' air,
And every living thing that moves on th' earth.
Wherever thus created, for no place 535
Is yet distinct by name, thence, as thou know'st,
He brought thee into this delicious grove,
This garden, planted with the trees of God,
Delectable both to behold and taste;
And freely all their pleasant fruit for food 540
Gave thee; all sorts are here that all th' earth yields,
Variety without end; but of the tree,
Which tasted works knowledge of good and evil,
Thou may'st not; in the day thou eat'st, thou dy'st;
Death is the penalty impos'd; beware, 545

And govern well thy appetite, lest Sin
Surprise thee, and her black attendant, Death.

Here finish'd he, and all that he had made
View'd, and behold all was entirely good;
So ev'n and morn accomplish'd the sixth day: 550

Yet not till the Creator from his work
Desisting, though unwearied, up return'd,
Up to the Heav'n of Heav'ns, his high abode,
Thence to behold this new created world,
Th' addition of his empire, how it show'd 555

In prospect from his throne, how good, how fair,
Answ'ring his great idea. Up he rode
Follow'd with acclamation, and the sound
Symphonious of ten thousand harps that tun'd
Angelic harmonies: the earth, the air 560

Refounded, (thou remember'st, for thou heardst)
The Heav'ns and all the constellations rung,
The planets in their station list'ning stood,
While the bright pomp ascended jubilant.

Open, ye everlasting gates, they sung, 565
Open, ye Heav'ns, your living doors; let in
The great Creator, from his work return'd
Magnificent, his six days work, a world;

Open, and henceforth oft; for God will deign
To visit oft the dwellings of just men, 570
Delighted, and with frequent intercourse
Thither will send his winged messengers

On errands of supernal grace. So sung
The glorious train ascending: he through Heav'n,
That open'd wide her blazing portals, led, 575

To God's eternal house direct the way,
A broad and ample road, whose dust is gold
And pavement stars, as stars to thee appear,
Seen in the galaxy, that milky way,

Which nightly, as a circling zone, thou see'st 580
Powder'd with stars. And now on earth the sev'nth
Evening arose in Eden; for the sun

Was set, and twilight from the east came on,
Forerunning night; when at the holy mount
Of Heav'n's high-seated top, th' imperial throne 585

Of Godhead, fix'd for ever firm and sure,
The filial Pow'r arriv'd, and sat him down
With his great Father, for he also went
Invisible, yet stay'd, (such privilege

Hath Omniprefence) and the work ordain'd, 590
Author and end of all things, and from work
Now resting, blest'd and hallow'd the sev'nth day,
As resting on that day from all his work,
But not in silence holy kept; the harp
Had work and rested not; the solemn pipe, 595
And dulcimer, all organs of sweet stop,
All sounds on fret by string or golden wire
Temper'd soft tunings, intermix'd with voice
Choral or unison: of incense clouds,
Fuming from golden censures hid the mount. 600
Creation and the six days acts they sung,
Great are thy works, Jehovah, infinite
Thy pow'r; what thought can measure thee, or tongue
Relate thee? greater now in thy return
Than from the giant angels; thee that day 605
Thy thunders magnify'd; but to create
Is greater than created to destroy.
Who can impair thee, mighty King, or bound
Thy empire; easily the proud attempt
Of sp'rits apostate and their counsels vain 610
Thou hast repell'd, while impiously they thought
Thee to diminish, and from thee withdraw
The number of thy worshippers. Who seeks
To lessen thee, against his purpose serves
To manifest the more thy might: his evil 615
Thou usest, and from thence creat'st more good.
Witness this new-made world, another Heav'n
From Heaven-gate not far, founded in view
On the clear hyaline, the glassy sea;
Of amplitude almost immense, with stars 620
Numerous, and every star perhaps a world
Of destin'd habitation; but thou know'st
Their seasons: among these the seat of men
Earth, with her nether ocean circumfus'd,
Their pleasant dwelling place. Thrice happy men 625
And sons of men, whom God hath thus advanc'd,
Created in his image, there to dwell
And worship him, and in reward to rule
Over his works, on earth, in sea, or air;
And multiply a race of worshippers, 630
Holy and just: thrice happy, if they know
Their happiness, and persevere upright.

So sung they, and the empyrean rung
With halleluiahs : thus was Sabbath kept.
And thy request think now fulfill'd, that ask'd 635
How first this world and face of things began,
And what before thy memory was done
From the beginning, that posterity,
Inform'd by thee, might know ; if else thou seek'st
Aught, not surpassing human measure, say. 640

End of the Seventh Book.

P A R A D I S E L O S T.

B O O K V I I I.

THE ARGUMENT.

Adam enquires concerning celestial motions; is doubtfully answered, and exhorted to search rather things more worthy of knowledge: Adam assents; and still desirous to detain Raphael, relates to him what he remembered since his own creation; his placing in Paradise, his talk with God concerning solitude and fit society; his first meeting and nuptials with Eve; his discourse with the angel thereupon; who, after admonitions repeated, departs.

PARADISE LOST.

B O O K V I I I.

THE angel ended, and in Adam's ear
So charming left his voice, that he a while
Thought him still speaking, still stood fix'd to hear:
Then, as new wak'd, thus gratefully reply'd.
What thanks sufficient, or what recompense
Equal have I to render thee, divine
Historian, who thus largely hast allay'd
The thirst I had of knowledge, and vouchsaf'd
This friendly condescension to relate
Things else by me unsearchable, now heard
With wonder, but delight, and, as is due,
With glory attributed to the high
Creator? something yet of doubt remains,
Which only thy solution can resolve.
When I behold this goodly frame, this world
Of Heav'n and earth consisting, and compute
Their magnitudes, this earth a spot, a grain,
An atom, with the firmament compar'd,
And all her number'd stars, that seem to roll
Spaces incomprehensible (for such
Their distance argues and their swift return
Diurnal) merely to officiate light
Round this opacous earth, this punctual spot,
One day and night, in all their vast survey
Useless besides; reasoning I oft admire,
How nature wise and frugal could commit
Such disproportions, with superfluous hand

So many nobler bodies to create,
 Greater so manifold, to this one use,
 For aught appears, and on their orbs impose 30
 Such restless revolution day by day
 Repeated, while the sedentary earth,
 That better might with far less compass move,
 Serv'd by more noble than herself, attains
 Her end without least motion, and receives, 35
 As tribute, such a sumless journey brought
 Of incorporeal speed, her warmth and light;
 Speed, to describe whose swiftness number fails.

So spake our fire, and by his count'nance seem'd
 Ent'ring on studious thoughts abstruse, which Eve 40
 Perceiving, where she sat retir'd in sight,
 With lowliness majestic from her seat,
 And grace that won who saw to wish her stay,
 Rose, and went forth among her fruits and flow'rs,
 To visit how they prosper'd, bud and bloom, 45
 Her nursery; they at her coming sprung,
 And, touch'd by her fair tendence, gladlier grew.
 Yet went she not, as not with such discourse
 Delighted, or not capable her ear
 Of what was high: such pleasure she reserv'd, 50
 Adam relating, she sole auditress;
 Her husband the relator she preferr'd
 Before the angel, and of him to ask
 Chose rather; he, she knew, would intermix
 Grateful digressions, and solve high dispute 55
 With conjugal caresses; from his lip
 Not words alone pleas'd her. O when meet now
 Such pairs, in love and mutual honour join'd?
 With goddess-like demeanour forth she went;
 Not unattended; for on her as queen 60
 A pomp of winning graces waited still,
 And from about her shot darts of desire
 Into all eyes, to wish her still in sight.
 And Raphael now to Adam's doubt propos'd
 Benevolent and facile thus reply'd. 65

To ask or search I blame thee not, for Heav'n
 Is as the book of God before thee set,
 Wherein to read his wondrous works, and learn
 His seasons, hours, or days, or months, or years:
 This to attain, whether Heav'n move or earth, 70

Imports not, if thou reckon right; the rest
From man or angel the great Architect
Did wisely to conceal, and not divulge
His secrets to be scann'd by them who ought
Rather admire; or, if they list to try 75
Conjecture, he his fabric of the Heav'ns
Hath left to their disputes, perhaps to move
His laughter at their quaint opinions wide
Hereafter, when they come to model Heav'n,
And calculate the stars, how they will wield 80
The mighty frame, how build, unbuild, contrive
To save appearances, how gird the sphere
With centric and eccentric scribbl'd o'er,
Cycle and epicycle, orb in orb.
Already by thy reasoning this I guess, 85
Who art to lead thy offspring, and supposest
That bodies bright and greater should not serve
The less not bright, nor Heav'n such journeys run,
Earth sitting still, when she alone receives
The benefit. Consider first, that great 90
Or bright infers not excellence: the earth,
Though, in comparison of Heav'n, so small,
Nor glist'ring, may of solid good contain
More plenty than the sun that barren shines,
Whose virtue on itself works no effect, 95
But in the fruitful earth; there first receiv'd
His beams, unactive else, their vigour find.
Yet not to earth are those bright luminaries
Officious, but to thee, earth's habitant.
And for the Heav'n's wide circuit, let it speak 100
The Maker's high magnificence, who built
So spacious, and his line stretch'd out so far;
That man may know he dwells not in his own;
An edifice too large for him to fill,
Lodg'd in a small partition, and the rest 105
Ordain'd for uses to his Lord best known.
The swiftness of those circles attribute,
Though numberless, to his omnipotence,
That to corporeal substances could add
Speed almost spiritual; me thou think'st not slow, 110
Who since the morning hour set out from Heav'n,
Where God resides, and ere mid-day arriv'd
In Eden, distance inexpressible

By numbers that have name. But this I urge,
Admitting motion in the Heav'ns, to show 115
Invalid that which thee to doubt it mov'd;
Not that I so affirm, though so it seem
To thee, who hast thy dwelling here on earth.
God, to remove his ways from human sense,
Plac'd Heav'n from earth so far, that earthly sight, 120
If it presume, might err in things too high,
And no advantage gain. What if the sun
Be center to the world, and other stars,
By his attractive virtue and their own
Incited, dance about him various rounds? 125
Their wand'ring course now high, now low, then hid,
Progressive, retrograde, or standing still,
In six thou seest; and what if sev'nth to these
The planet earth, so steadfast though she seem,
Insensibly three different motions move? 130
Which else to several spheres thou must ascribe,
Mov'd contrary with thwart obliquities;
Or save the sun his labour, and that swift
Nocturnal and diurnal rhomb suppos'd,
Invisible else above all stars, the wheel 135
Of day and night; which needs not thy belief,
If earth industrious of herself fetch day
Travelling east, and with her part averse
From the sun's beam meet night, her other part
Still luminous by his ray. What if that light 140
Sent from her through the wide transpicuous air,
To the terrestrial moon be as a star
Enlightning her by day, as she by night
This earth? reciprocal, if land be there,
Fields and inhabitants: her spots thou seest 145
As clouds, and clouds may rain, and rain produce
Fruits in her soften'd soil, for some to eat
Allotted there; and other suns perhaps,
With their attendant moons, thou wilt descry
Communicating male and female light, 150
Which two great sexes animate the world,
Stor'd in each orb perhaps with some that live.
For such vast room in nature unpossess'd
By living soul, desert and desolate,
Only to shine, yet scarce to contribute 155
Each orb a glimpse of light, convey'd so far

Down to this habitable, which returns
Light back to them, is obvious to dispute.
But whether thus these things, or whether not,
Whether the sun predominant in Heav'n 160
Rise on the earth, or earth rise on the sun,
He from the east his flaming road begin,
Or she from west her silent course advance
With inoffensive pace, that spinning sleeps
On her soft axle, while she paces even, 165
And bears thee soft with the smooth air along,
Solicit not thy thoughts with matters hid;
Leave them to God above, him serve and fear;
Of other creatures, as him pleases best,
Where-ever plac'd, let him dispose: joy thou 170
In what he gives to thee, this Paradise
And thy fair Eve: Heav'n is for thee too high
To know what passes there; be lowly wise:
Think only what concerns thee and thy being;
Dream not of other worlds, what creatures there 175
Live, in what state, condition, or degree,
Contented that thus far hath been reveal'd,
Not of earth only, but of highest Heav'n.

To whom thus Adam, clear'd of doubt, reply'd.
How fully hast thou satisfy'd me, pure 180
Intelligence of Heav'n, angel serene,
And freed from intricacies, taught to live
The easiest way, nor with perplexing thoughts
To interrupt the sweet of life, from which
God hath bid dwell far off all anxious cares, 185
And not molest us, unless we ourselves
Seek them with wand'ring thoughts, and notions vain.
But apt the mind or fancy is to rove
Uncheck'd, and of her roving is no end;
Till warn'd, or by experience taught, she learn, 190
That not to know at large of things remote
From use, obscure and subtle, but to know
That which before us lies in daily life,
Is the prime wisdom; what is more, is fume,
Or emptiness, or fond impertinence, 195
And renders us in things that most concern
Unpractis'd, unprepar'd, and still to seek.
Therefore from this high pitch let us descend
A lower flight, and speak of things at hand

Useful, whence haply mention may arise 200
Of something not unseasonable to ask
By suff'rance, and thy wonted favour deign'd.
Thee I have heard relating what was done
Ere my remembrance : now hear me relate
My story, which perhaps thou hast not heard ; 205
And day is not yet spent ; till then thou seest
How subtly to detain thee I devise,
Inviting thee to hear while I relate,
Fond, were it not in hope of thy reply :
For while I sit with thee, I seem in Heav'n, 210
And sweeter thy discourse is to my ear
Than fruits of palm-tree, pleasantest to thirst
And hunger both, from labour, at the hour
Of sweet repast : they satiate, and soon fill,
Though pleasant ; but thy words with grace divine 215
Imbu'd, bring to their sweetness's no satiety.

To whom thus Raphael answer'd heav'nly meek.
Nor are thy lips ungraceful, fire of men,
Nor tongue ineloquent : for God on thee
Abundantly his gifts hath also pour'd 220
Inward and outward both, his image fair :
Speaking or mute, all comeliness and grace
Attends thee, and each word, each motion forms ;
Nor less think we in Heav'n of thee on earth
Than of our fellow-servant, and enquire 225
Gladly into the ways of God with man :
For God we see hath honour'd thee, and set
On man his equal love. Say therefore on ;
For I that day was absent, as befel,
Bound on a voyage uncouth and obscure, 230
Far on excursion tow'rd's the gates of Hell ;
Squar'd in full legion (such command we had)
To see that none thence issued forth a spy,
Or enemy, while God was in his work,
Lest he, incens'd at such eruption bold, 235
Destruction with creation might have mix'd.
Not that they durst, without his leave, attempt ;
But us he sends upon his high behests
For state, as sov'reign King, and to inure
Our prompt obedience. Fast we found, fast shut 240
The dismal gates, and barricado'd strong ;
But long ere our approaching heard within

Noise, other than the sound of dance or song,
Torment, and loud lament, and furious rage.
Glad we return'd up to the coasts of light 245
Ere Sabbath ev'ning: so we had in charge.
But thy relation now; for I attend,
Pleas'd with thy words no less than thou with mine.

So spake the godlike pow'r, and thus our fire.
For man to tell how human life began 250
Is hard; for who himself beginning knew?
Desire with thee still longer to converse
Induc'd me. As new wak'd from soundest sleep
Soft on the flow'ry herb I found me laid
In balmy sweat, which with his beams the sun 255
Soon dry'd, and on the reeking moisture fed.
Strait toward Heav'n my wond'ring eyes I turn'd,
And gaz'd a while the ample sky, till rais'd
By quick instinctive motion, up I sprung,
As thitherward endeavouring, and upright 260
Stood on my feet: about me round I saw
Hill, dale, and shady woods, and sunny plains,
And liquid lapse of murmuring streams; by these,
Creatures that liv'd and mov'd, and walk'd, or flew,
Birds on the branches warbling; all things smil'd, 265
With fragrance and with joy my heart o'erflow'd.
Myself I then perus'd, and limb by limb
Survey'd, and sometimes went, and sometimes ran
With supple joints, as lively vigour led:
But who I was, or where, or from what cause, 270
Knew not; to speak I try'd, and forthwith spake;
My tongue obey'd, and readily could name
Whate'er I saw. Thou sun, said I, fair light,
And thou enlighten'd earth, so fresh and gay,
Ye hills, and dales, ye rivers, woods, and plains, 275
And ye that live and move, fair creatures, tell,
Tell, if ye saw, how came I thus, how here?
Not of myself; by some great Maker then,
In goodness and in pow'r pre-eminent;
Tell me, how may I know him, how adore, 280
From whom I have that thus I move and live,
And feel that I am happier than I know.
While thus I call'd, and stray'd I knew not whither
From where I first drew air, and first beheld
This happy light; when answer none return'd, 285

On a green shady bank profuse of flowers
Pensive I sat me down; there gentle sleep
First found me, and with soft oppression seiz'd
My droused sense, untroubled, though I thought
I then was passing to my former state 293
Insensible, and forthwith to dissolve:
When suddenly stood at my head a dream,
Whose inward apparition gently mov'd
My fancy to believe I yet had being,
And liv'd. One came, methought, of shape divine, 295
And said, Thy mansion wants thee, Adam, rise,
First man, of men innumerable ordain'd
First Father; call'd by thee, I come thy guide
To the garden of bliss, thy seat prepar'd.
So saying, by the hand he took me rais'd, 300
And over fields and waters, as in air
Smooth sliding without step, last led me up
A woody mountain; whose high top was plain,
A circuit wide, inclos'd, with godliest trees
Planted, with walks and bow'rs, that what I saw 305
Of earth before scarce pleasant seem'd. Each tree
Loaden with fairest fruit, that hung to th' eye
Tempting, stirr'd in me sudden appetite
To pluck and eat; whereat I wak'd and found
Before mine eyes all real, as the dream 310
Had lively shadow'd. Here had new begun
My wand'ring, had not he who was my guide
Up hither, from among the trees appear'd,
Presence divine. Rejoicing, but with awe,
In adoration at his feet I fell 315
Submiss: he rear'd me, and, Whom thou sought'st I am,
Said mildly, Author of all this thou seest
Above, or round about thee, or beneath.
This Paradise I give thee, count it thine
To till and keep, and of the fruit to eat: 320
Of every tree that in the garden grows
Eat freely with glad heart; fear here no dearth:
But of the tree whose operation brings
Knowledge of good and ill, which I have set
The pledge of thy obedience and thy faith, 325
Amid the garden by the tree of life,
Remember what I warn thee, shun to taste,
And shun the bitter consequence; for know,

The day thou eat'st thereof, my sole command
Transgress'd, inevitably thou shalt die, 330

From that day mortal, and this happy state
Shalt lose, expell'd from hence into a world
Of woe and sorrow. Sternly he pronounc'd
The rigid interdiction, which resounds

Yet dreadful in mine ear, though in my choice 335
Not to incur; but soon his clear aspect

Return'd, and gracious purpose this renew'd.
Not only these fair bounds, but all the earth

To thee and to thy race I give; as lords
Possess it, and all things that therein live, 340

Or live in sea, or air, beast, fish, and fowl.
In sign whereof each bird and beast behold

After their kinds; I bring them to receive
From thee their names, and pay thee fealty

With low subjection; understand the same 345
Of fish within their watry residence,

Not hither summon'd, since they cannot change
Their element to draw the thinner air.

As thus he spake, each bird and beast behold
Approaching two and two, these cowering low 350

With blandishment, each bird stoop'd on his wing.
I nam'd them, as they pass'd, and understood

Their nature, with such knowledge God indu'd
My sudden apprehension: but in these

I found not what methought I wanted still; 355
And to the heav'nly vision thus presum'd.

O by what name, for thou above all these,
Above mankind, or aught than mankind higher,

Surpassest far my naming, how may I
Adore thee, Author of this universe 360

And all this good to man? for whose well being
So amply, and with hand so liberal

Thou hast provided all things: but with me
I see not who partakes. In solitude

What happiness, who can enjoy alone, 365
Or all enjoying, what contentment find?

Thus I presumptuous; and the vision bright,
As with a smile more brighten'd, thus reply'd.

What call'st thou solitude? is not the earth
With various living creatures, and the air, 370

Replenish'd, and all these at thy command

To come and play before thee? Know'st thou not
Their language and their ways? they also know,
And reason not contemptibly; with these
Find pastime, and bear rule; thy realm is large. 375
So spake the universal Lord, and seem'd
So ord'ring. I, with leave of speech implor'd,
And humble deprecation, thus reply'd.

Let not my words offend thee, heav'nly Power,
My Maker, be propitious while I speak. 380
Hast thou not made me here thy substitute,
And these inferior far beneath me set?

Among unequals what society
Can sort, what harmony or true delight?
Which must be mutual, in proportion due 385
Giv'n and receiv'd; but in disparity
The one intense, the other still remiss
Cannot well suit with either, but soon prove
Tedious alike. Of fellowship I speak
Such as I seek, fit to participate 390
All rational delight, wherein the brute
Cannot be human consort; they rejoice
Each with their kind, lion with lions;
So fitly them in pairs thou hast combin'd;
Much less can bird with beast, or fish with fowl 395
So well converse, nor with the ox the ape;
Worse then can man with beast, and least of all.

Whereto th' Almighty answer'd not displeas'd.
A nice and subtle happiness I see
Thou to thyself proposest, in the choice 400
Of thy associates, Adam, and wilt taste
No pleasure, though in pleasure, solitary.
What think'st thou then of me, and this my state?
Seem I to thee sufficiently possess'd
Of happiness, or not? who am alone 405
From all eternity; for none I know
Second to me or like, equal much less.
How have I then with whom to hold converse,
Save with the creatures which I made, and those
To me inferior, infinite descents 410
Beneath what other creatures are to thee?

He ceas'd, I lowly answer'd. To attain
The highth and depth of thy eternal ways
All human thoughts come short, Supreme of things;

Thou in thyself art perfect, and in thee 515
Is no deficiency found; not so is man
But in degree, the cause of his desire
By conversation with his like to help,
Or solace his defects. No need that thou
Shouldst propagate, already infinite, 520
And through all numbers absolute, though one;
But man by number is to manifest
His single imperfection, and beget
Like of his like, his image multiply'd,
In unity defective, which requires 425
Collateral love, and dearest amity.
Thou in thy secrecy although alone,
Best with thyself accompanied, seek'st not
Social communication, yet so pleas'd
Canst raise thy creature to what highth thou wilt 430
Of union or communion, deify'd;
I by conversing cannot these erect
From prone, nor in their ways complacence find.
Thus I imbolden'd spake, and freedom us'd
Permissive, and acceptance found, which gain'd 435
This answer from the gracious voice divine.

Thus far to try thee, Adam, I was pleas'd,
And find thee knowing, not of beasts alone,
Which thou hast rightly nam'd, but of thyself,
Expressing well the sp'rit within thee free, 440
My image, not imparted to the brute;
Whose fellowship therefore unmeet for thee
Good reason was thou freely should dislike,
And be so minded still; I, ere thou spak'st,
Knew it not good for man to be alone; 445
And no such company as then thou saw'st
Intended thee, for trial only brought,
To see how thou could'st judge of fit and meet:
What next I bring shall please thee, be assur'd,
Thy likeness, thy fit help, thy other self, 450
Thy wish exactly to thy heart's desire.

He ended, or I heard no more; for now
My earthly by his heav'nly overpower'd,
Which it had long stood under, strain'd to th' highth
In that celestial colloquy sublime, 455
As with an object that excels the sense
Dazzled and spent, sunk down, and sought repair

Of sleep, which instantly fell on me, call'd
 By nature as in aid, and clos'd mine eyes.
 Mine eyes he clos'd, but open left the cell 460
 Of fancy, my internal sight, by which
 Abstract as in a trance methought I saw,
 Though sleeping, where I lay, and saw the shape
 Still glorious before whom awake I stood :
 Who stooping open'd my left side, and took 465
 From thence a rib, with cordial-spirits warm,
 And life-blood streaming fresh ; wide was the wound,
 But suddenly with flesh fill'd up and heal'd :
 The rib he form'd and fashion'd with his hands ;
 Under his forming hands a creature grew, 470
 Manlike, but different sex, so lovely fair,
 That what seem'd fair in all the world, seem'd now
 Mean, or in her summ'd up, in her contain'd
 And in her looks, which from that time infus'd
 Sweetness into my heart, unfelt before, 475
 And into all things from her air inspir'd
 The spirit of love, and amorous delight.
 She disappear'd, and left me dark ; I wak'd
 To find her, or for ever to deplore
 Her loss, and other pleasures all abjure : 480
 When out of hope, behold her, not far off,
 Such as I saw her in my dream, adorn'd
 With what all earth or Heav'n could bestow
 To make her amiable : on she came,
 Led by her heav'nly Maker, though unseen, 485
 And guided by his voice, nor uniform'd
 Of nuptial sanctity and marriage-rites :
 Grace was in all her steps, Heav'n in her eye,
 In every gesture dignity and love.
 I overjoy'd could not forbear aloud. 490

This turn hath made amends ; thou hast fulfill'd
 Thy words, Creator bounteous and benign,
 Giver of all things fair, but fairest this
 Of all thy gifts, nor enviest. I now see
 Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, myself 495
 Before me ; Woman is her name, of man
 Extracted ; for this cause he shall forgo
 Father and mother, and to his wife adhere ;
 And they shall be one flesh, one heart, one soul.
 She heard me thus ; and though divinely brought, 500

Yet innocence, and virgin modesty,
Her virtue and the conscience of her worth,
That would be woo'd, and not unsought be won,
Not obvious, not obtrusive, but retir'd,
The more desireable, or, to say all, 505
Nature herself, though pure of sinful thought,
Wrought in her so, that seeing me, she turn'd:
I follow'd her, she what was honour knew,
And with obsequious majesty approv'd
My pleaded reason. To the nuptial bow'r 510
I led her blushing like the morn: all Heav'n,
And happy constellations on that hour
Shed their selected influence; the earth
Gave signs of gratulation, and each hill;
Joyous the birds; fresh gales and gentle airs 515
Whisper'd it to the woods, and from their wings
Flung rose, flung odours from the spicy shrub,
Disporting, till the amorous bird of night
Sung spousal, and bid haste the ev'ning-star
On his hill-top, to light the bridal lamp. 520

Thus have I told thee all my state, and brought
My story to the sum of earthly bliss
Which I enjoy; and must confess to find
In all things else delight indeed, but such
As us'd or not, works in the mind no change, 525
Nor vehement desire; these delicacies
I mean of taste, sight, smell, herbs, fruits, and flow'rs,
Walks, and the melody of birds; but here
Far otherwise transported, I behold,
Transported touch; here passion first I felt, 530
Commotion strange, in all enjoyments else
Superior and unmov'd, here only weak
Against the charm of beauty's pow'rful glance.
Or nature fail'd in me, and left some part
Not proof enough such object to sustain; 535
Or from my side subducting, took perhaps
More than enough; at least on her bestow'd
Too much of ornament, in outward show
Elaborate, of inward less exact.
For well I understand in the prime end 540
Of nature her th' inferior; in the mind
And inward faculties, which most excel;
In outward also her resembling less

His image who made both, and less expressing
The character of that dominion given 545
O'er other creatures: yet when I approach
Her loveliness, so absolute she seems,
And in herself complete, so well to know
Her own, that what she wills to do or say,
Seems wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best; 550
All higher knowledge in her presence falls
Degraded; wisdom in discourse with her
Loses discount'nanc'd, and like folly shows;
Authority and reason on her wait,
As one intended first, not after made 555
Occasionally; and, to consummate all,
Greatness of mind, and nobleness, their seat
Build in her loveliest, and create an awe
About her, as a guard angelic plac'd.

To whom the angel with contracted brow. 560
Accuse not nature, she hath done her part;
Do thou but thine; and be not diffident
Of wisdom; she deserts thee not, if thou
Dismiss not her, when most thou needst her nigh,
By attributing overmuch to things 565
Less excellent, as thou thyself perceiv'st.
For what admir'st thou, what transports thee so,
An outside? fair no doubt, and worthy well
Thy cherishing, thy honouring, and thy love,
Not thy subjection. Weigh with her thyself; 570
Then value: Oft-times nothing profits more
Than self-esteem, grounded on just and right
Well-manag'd; of that skill the more thou know'st,
The more she will acknowledge thee her head,
And to realities yield all her shows: 575
Made so adorn for thy delight the more,
So awful, that with honour thou may'st love
Thy mate, who sees when thou art seen least wise.
But if the sense of touch, whereby mankind
Is propagated, seem such dear delight 580
Beyond all other, think the same vouchsaf'd
To cattle and each beast; which would not be
To them made common and divulg'd, if aught
Therein enjoy'd were worthy to subdue
The soul of man, or passion in him move. 585
What higher in her society thou find'st

Attractive, human, rational, still love;
In loving thou dost well, in passion not,
Wherein true love consist not: love refines
The thoughts, and heart enlarges; hath his seat 590
In reason, and is judicious; is the scale
By which to heav'nly love thou may'st ascend;
Not sunk in carnal pleasure; for which cause
Among the beasts no mate for thee was found.

To whom thus half abash'd Adam reply'd. 595
Neither her outside form'd so fair, nor aught
In procreation common to all kinds
(Though higher of the genial bed by far,
And with mysterious reverence I deem)
So much delights me, as those graceful acts, 600
Those thousand decencies that daily flow
From all her words and actions, mix'd with love
And sweet compliance, which declare unfeign'd
Union of mind, or in us both one soul;
Harmony to behold in wedded pair 605
More grateful than harmonious sound to th' ear.
Yet these subject not: I to thee disclose
What inward thence I feel; not therefore foil'd,
Who meet with various objects, from the sense
Variouſly representing; yet still free 610
Approve the best, and follow what I approve.
To love thou blam'st me not; for love thou say'st
Leads up to Heav'n, is both the way and guide;
Bear with me then, if lawful what I ask;
Love not the heav'nly sp'rits, and how their love 615
Express they, by looks only, or do they mix
Irradiance, virtual or immediate touch?

To whom the angel, with a smile that glow'd
Celestial rosy red, love's proper hue,
Answer'd. Let it suffice thee that thou know'st 620
Us happy, and without love no happiness.
Whatever pure thou in the body enjoy'st
(And pure thou wert created) we enjoy
In eminence, and obstacle find none
Of membrane, joint, or limb, exclusive bars: 625
Easier than air with air, if spirits embrace,
Total they mix, union of pure with pure
Desiring; nor restrain'd conveyance need
As flesh to mix with flesh, or soul with soul.

But I can now no more; the parting sun 630
Beyond the earth's green cape and verdant isles
Hesperian sets, my signal to depart.

Be strong, live happy, and love; but first of all
Him whom to love is to obey, and keep
His great command; take heed lest passion sway 635
Thy judgment to do aught, which else free will
Would not admit; thine, and of all thy sons,
The weal or woe in thee is plac'd; beware.

I in thy persevering shall rejoice,
And all the blest'd: stand fast; to stand or fall 640
Free in thine own arbitrement it lies.

Perfect within, no outward aid require;
And all temptation to transgress repel.

So saying, he arose; whom Adam thus
Follow'd with benediction. Since to part, 645

Go heav'nly guest, ethereal messenger,
Sent from whose sov'reign goodness I adore.

Gentle to me and affable hath been

Thy condescension, and shall be honour'd ever
With grateful memory: thou to mankind 650

Be good and friendly still, and oft return.

So parted they, the angel up to Heav'n
From the thick shade, and Adam to his bow'r.

The End of the Eighth Book.

THE ARGUMENT.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK IX.

THE ARGUMENT.

Satan having compass'd the earth, with meditated guile returns as a mist by night into Paradise, and enters into the serpent sleeping. Adam and Eve in the morning go forth to their labours; which Eve proposes to divide in several places, each labouring apart: Adam consents not, alledging the danger, lest that enemy, of whom they were forewarn'd, should attempt her found alone: Eve, loath to be thought not circumspect or firm enough, urges her going apart, the rather desirous to make trial of her strength; Adam at last yields. The Serpent finds her alone; his subtle approach, first gazing, then speaking, with much flattery extolling Eve above all other creatures. Eve, wondering to hear the serpent speak, asks how he attain'd to human speech, and such understanding, not till now; the serpent answers, that, by tasting of a certain tree in the garden, he attained both to speech and reason, till then void of both: Eve requires him to bring her to that tree, and finds it to be the tree of knowledge forbidden. The serpent now grown bolder, with many wiles and arguments induces her at length to eat; she, pleased with the taste, deliberates a while whether to impart thereof to Adam or not; at last brings him of the fruit, relates what persuaded her to eat thereof: Adam at first amaz'd, but perceiving her lost, resolves, through vehemence of love, to perish with her; and extenuating the trespass, eats also of the fruit: the effects thereof in them both; they seek to cover their nakedness; then fall to variance and accusation of one another.

PARADISE LOST.

B O O K IX.

NO more of talk where God or angel guest
With man, as with his friend, familiar us'd
To sit indulgent, and with him partake
Rural repast, permitting him the while
Venial discourse unblam'd : I now must change 5
Those notes to tragic ; foul distrust, and breach
Disloyal on the part of man, revolt,
And disobedience ; on the part of Heaven
Now alienated, distance and distaste,
Anger and just rebuke, and judgment given, 10
That brought into this world a world of woe,
Sin, and her shadow Death, and Misery
Death's harbinger : sad task, yet argument
Not less, but more heroic than the wrath
Of stern Achilles on his foe pursu'd 15
Thrice fugitive about Troy wall ; or rage
Of Turnus for Lavinia disespous'd ;
Or Neptune's ire, or Juno's, that so long
Perplex'd the Greek, and Cytherea's son ;
If answerable stile I can obtain 20
Of my celestial patroness, who deigns
Her nightly visitation unimplor'd,
And dictates to me slumb'ring, or inspires
Easy my unpremeditated verse ;
Since first this subject for heroic song 25
Pleas'd me long chusing, and beginning late ;
Not sedulous by nature to indite

Wars, hitherto the only argument
Heroic deem'd, chief mast'ry to dissect
With long and tedious havock fabled knights 30
In battles feign'd; the better fortitude
Of patience and heroic martyrdom
Unsung; or to describe races and games,
Or tilting furniture, imblazon'd shields,
Impresses quaint, caparisons and steeds; 35
Bases and tinsel trappings, gorgeous knights
At joust and torneament; then marshal'd feast
Serv'd up in hall with sewers, and seneschals;
The skill of artifice or office mean,
Not that which justly gives heroic name 40
To person or to poem. Me of these
Nor skill'd nor studious, higher argument
Remains, sufficient of itself to raise
That name, unless an age too late, or cold
Climate, or years, damp my intended wing 45
Depress'd; and much they may, if all be mine,
Not hers who brings it nightly to my ear.
The sun was sunk, and after him the star
Of Hesperus, whose office is to bring
Twilight upon the earth, short arbiter 50
'Twixt day and night, and now from end to end
Night's hemisphere had veil'd th' horizon round:
When Satan, who late fled before the threats
Of Gabriel out of Eden, now improv'd
In meditated fraud and malice, bent 55
On man's destruction, maugre what might hap
Of heavier on himself, fearless return'd.
By night he fled, and at midnight return'd
From compassing the earth, cautious of day,
Since Uriel, regent of the sun, descry'd 60
His entrance, and forewarn'd the cherubim
That kept their watch; thence full of anguish driv'n,
The space of sev'n continued nights he rode
With darkness, thrice the equinoctial line
He circled, four times cross'd the car of night 65
From pole to pole, traversing each colure;
On th' eighth return'd, and on the coast averse
From entrance or cherubic watch, by stealth
Found unsuspected way. There was a place,
Now not, though sin, not time, first wrought the change,

Where Tigris at the foot of Paradise 71
Into a gulf shot under ground, till part
Rose up a fountain by the tree of life :
In with the river sunk, and with it rose
Satan, involv'd in rising mist, then sought 75
Where to lie hid : sea he had search'd and land
From Eden over Pontus, and the pool
Mæotis, up beyond the river Ob ;
Downward as far antarctic ; and in length
West from Orontes to the ocean barr'd 80
At Darien, thence to the land where flows
Ganges and Indus : thus the orb he roam'd
With narrow search, and with inspection deep
Consider'd every creature, which of all
Most opportune might serve his wiles, and found 85
The serpent subtlest beast of all the field.
Him after long debate, irresolute
Of thoughts revolv'd, his final sentence chose
Fit vessel, fittest imp of fraud, in whom
To enter, and his dark suggestions hide 90
From sharpest sight : for in the wily snake,
Whatever sleights none would suspicious mark,
As from his wit and native subtlety
Proceeding, which in other beasts observ'd
Doubt might beget of diabolic pow'r 95
Active within beyond the sense of brute.
Thus he resolv'd, but first from inward grief
His bursting passion into plaints thus pour'd.

O Earth, how like to Heav'n, if not preferr'd
More justly, seat worthier of gods, as built 100
With second thoughts, reforming what was old !
For what god after better worse would build ?
Terrestrial Heav'n, danc'd round by other Heav'ns
That shine, yet bear their bright officious lamps,
Light above light, for thee alone, as seems 105
In thee concent'ring all their precious beams
Of sacred influence ? As God in Heaven
Is center, yet extends to all ; so thou
Cent'ring receiv'st from all those orbs ; in thee,
Not in themselves, all their known virtue appears 110
Productive in herb, plant, and nobler birth
Of creatures animate with gradual life
Of growth, sense, reason, all sum'd up in man.

With what delight could I have walk'd thee round,
If I could joy in aught, sweet interchange 115
Of hill, and valley, rivers, woods and plains,
Now land, now sea, and shores with forest crown'd,
Rocks, dens, and caves! But I in none of these
Find place or refuge; and the more I see
Pleasures about me, so much more I feel 120
Torment within me, as from th' hateful siege
Of contraries; all good to me becomes
Bane, and in Heav'n much worse would be my state.
But neither here seek I, no nor in Heav'n
To dwell, unless by mast'ring Heav'n's Supreme; 125
Nor hope to be myself less miserable
By what I seek, but others to make such
As I, though thereby worse to me redound:
For only in destroying I find ease
To my relentless thoughts; and him destroy'd, 130
Or won to what may work his utter loss,
For whom all this was made, all this will soon
Follow, as to him link'd in weal or woe;
In woe then; that destruction wide may range:
To me shall be the glory sole among 135
Th' infernal pow'rs, in one day to have marr'd
What he Almighty stil'd, six nights and days
Continued making, and who knows how long
Before had been contriving, though perhaps
Not longer than since I in one night freed 140
From servitude inglorious well nigh half
Th' angelic name, and thinner left the throng
Of his adorers: he, to be aveng'd,
And to repair his numbers thus impair'd,
Whether such virtue spent of old now fail'd 145
More angels to create, if they at least
Are his created, or, to spite us more,
Determin'd to advance into our room
A creature form'd of earth, and him endow,
Exalted from so base original, 150
With heav'nly spoils, our spoils: what he decreed,
He effected; man he made, and for him built
Magnificent this world, and earth his seat,
Him lord pronounc'd, and, O indignity!
Subjected to his service angel-wings, 155
And flaming ministers to watch and tend

Their earthly charge: of these the vigilance
I dread, and to elude, thus wrapt in mist
Of midnight vapour glide obscure, and pry
In every bush and brake, where hap may find 160
The serpent sleeping, in whose mazy folds
To hide me, and the dark intent I bring.
O foul descent! that I who erst contended
With gods to sit the high'st, am now constrain'd
Into a beast, and mix'd with bestial slime, 165
This essence to incarnate and imbrute,
That to the height of deity aspir'd;
But what will not ambition and revenge
Descend to! Who aspires must down as low
As high he soar'd, obnoxious first or last 170
To basest things. Revenge, at first though sweet,
Bitter ere long back on itself recoils:
Let it; I reckon not, so it light well aim'd,
Since higher I fall short, on him who next
Provokes my envy, this new favourite 175
Of Heav'n, this man of clay, son of despite,
Whom us the more to spite his Maker-rais'd
From dust: spite then with spite is best repaid.

So saying, through each thicket, dank or dry,
Like a black mist low creeping, he held on 180
His midnight search, where soonest he might find
The serpent: him fast sleeping soon he found
In labyrinth of many a round self-roll'd,
His head the midst, well stor'd with subtle wiles:
Not yet in horrid shade or dismal den, 185
Nor nocent yet, but on the grassy herb
Fearless unfear'd he slept: in at his mouth
The Devil enter'd, and his brutal sense,
In heart or head, possessing, soon inspir'd
With act intelligent; but his sleep 190
Disturb'd not, waiting close the approach of morn.

Now when as sacred light began to dawn
In Eden on the humid flow'rs, that breath'd
Their morning incense, when all things that breathe,
From th' earth's great altar send up silent praise 195
To the Creator, and his nostrils fill
With grateful smell, forth came the human pair,
And join'd their vocal worship to the quire
Of creatures wanting voice; that done, partake

The season, prime for sweetest scents and airs : 200
 Then commune how that day they best may ply
 Their growing work : for much their work outgrew
 The hands dispatch of two gard'ning so wide ;
 And Eve first to her husband thus began.

Adam, well may we labour still to dress 205
 This garden, still to tend plant, herb and flow'r,
 Our pleasant task injoin'd, but till more hands
 Aid us, the work under our labour grows,
 Luxurious by restraint ; what we by day
 Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind, 210
 One night or two with wanton growth derides
 Tending to wild. Thou therefore now advise,
 Or bear what to my mind first thoughts present ;
 Let us divide our labours ; thou where choice
 Leads thee, or where most needs, whether to wind 215
 The woodbind round this arbour, or direct
 The clasping ivy where to climb, while I
 In yonder spring of roses intermix'd
 With myrtle, find what to redress till noon :
 For while so near each other thus all day 220
 Our task we chuse, what wonder if so near
 Looks intervene and smiles, or object new
 Casual discourse draw on, which intermits
 Our day's work brought to little, though begun
 Early, and th' hour of supper comes unearn'd. 225

To whom mild answer Adam thus return'd.
 Sole Eve, associate sole, to me beyond
 Compare above all living creatures dear,
 Well hast thou motion'd, well thy thoughts employ'd
 How we might best fulfil the work which here 230
 God hath assigned us ; nor of me shalt pass
 Unprais'd : for nothing lovelier can be found
 In woman, than to study household good,
 And good works in her husband to promote.
 Yet not so strictly hath our Lord impos'd 235
 Labour, as to debar us, when we need
 Refreshment, whether food, or talk between,
 Food of the mind, or this sweet intercourse
 Of looks and smiles ; for smiles from reason flow,
 To brute deny'd, and are of love the food, 240
 Love not the lowest end of human life.
 For not to irksome toil, but to delight

He made us, and delight to reason join'd.
These paths and bow'rs doubt not but our joint hands
Will keep from wilderneys with ease, as wide 245
As we need walk, till younger hands ere long
Assist us. But if much converse perhaps
Thee satiate, to short absence I could yield:
For solitude sometimes is best society,
And short retirement urges sweet return. 250
But other doubt possesses me, lest harm
Befal thee sever'd from me; for thou know'st
What hath been warn'd us, what malicious foe,
Envyng our happiness, and of his own
Despairing, seeks to work us woe and shame 255
By sly assault; and somewhere nigh at hand
Watches, no doubt, with greedy hope to find
His wish and best advantage, us asunder,
Hopeless to circumvent us join'd, where each
To other speedy aid might lend at need; 260
Whether his first design be to withdraw
Our fealty from God, or to disturb
Conjugal love, than which perhaps no bliss
Enjoy'd by us excites his envy more;
Or this, or worse, leave not the faithful side 265
That gave thee being, still shades thee and protects.
The wife, where danger or dishonour lurks,
Safest and seemliest by her husband stays,
Who guards her, or with her the worst endures.

To whom the virgin majesty of Eve, 270
As one who loves, and some unkindness meets,
With sweet austere composure thus reply'd.

Offspring of Heav'n and earth, and all earth's Lord,
That such an enemy we have, who seeks
Our ruin, both by thee inform'd I learn, 275
And from the parting angel over-heard,
As in a shady nook I stood behind,
Just then return'd at shut of ev'ning-flowers.
But that thou shouldst my firmness therefore doubt
To God or thee, because we have a foe 280
May tempt it, I expected not to hear.
His violence thou fear'st not; being such
As we, not capable of death or pain,
Can either not receive, or can repel.
His fraud is then thy fear, which plain infers 285

Thy equal fear that my firm faith and love
Can by his fraud be shaken or seduc'd;
Thoughts, which how found they harbour in thy breast,
Adam, misthought of her to thee so dear?

To whom with healing words Adam reply'd. 290

Daughter of God and man, immortal Eve,
For such thou art, from sin and blame entire:

Not diffident of thee do I dissuade

Thy absence from my sight, but to avoid

Th' attempt itself, intended by our foe. 295

For he who tempts, though in vain, at least asperges

The tempted with dishonour foul, suppos'd

Not incorruptible of faith, not proof

Against temptation: thou thyself with scorn

And anger wouldst resent the offer'd wrong, 300

Though ineffectual found: misdeem not then,

If such affront I labour to avert

From thee alone, which on us both at once

The enemy, though bold, will hardly dare,

Or daring, first on me th' assault shall light. 305

Nor thou his malice and false guile contemn;

Subtle he needs must be, who could seduce

Angels; nor think superfluous others aid.

I from the influence of thy looks receive

Access in every virtue, in thy sight 310

More wise, more watchful, stronger, if need were

Of outward strength; while shame, thou looking on,

Shame to be overcome or over-reach'd

Would utmost vigour raise, and rais'd unite.

Why should not thou like sense within thee feel 315

When I am present, and thy trial chuse

With me, best witness of thy virtue try'd!

So spake domestic Adam in his care

And matrimonial love; but Eve, who thought

Less attributed to her faith sincere, 320

Thus her reply with accent sweet renew'd.

If this be our condition, thus to dwell

In narrow circuit straiten'd by a foe,

Subtle or violent, we not indu'd

Single with like defence, where-ever met, 325

How are we happy, still in fear of harm?

But harm precedes not sin: only our foe

Tempting affronts us with his foul esteem

Of our integrity: his foul esteem
Sticks no dishonour on our front, but turns 330
Foul on himself; then wherefore shunn'd or fear'd
By us? who rather double honour gain
From his surmise prov'd false; find peace within,
Favour from Heav'n, our witness from th' event.
And what is faith, love, virtue unessay'd 335
Alone, within exterior help sustain'd?
Let us not then suspect our happy state
Left so imperfect by the Maker wise,
As not secure to single or combin'd.
Frail is our happiness, if this be so, 340
And Eden were no Eden thus expos'd.
To whom thus Adam fervently reply'd.
O Woman, best are all things as the will
Of God ordain'd them; his creating hand
Nothing imperfect or deficient left 345
Of all that he created, much less man,
Or aught that might his happy state secure,
Secure from outward force; within himself
The danger lies, yet lies within his power:
Against his will he can receive no harm. 350
But God left free the will; for what obeys
Reason, is free; and reason he made right,
But bid her well be ware, and still erect,
Left by some fair appearing good surpriz'd
She dictate false, and misinform the will 355
To do what God expressly hath forbid.
Not then mistrust, but tender love enjoins,
That I should mind thee oft, and mind thou me.
Firm we subsist, yet possible to swerve;
Since reason not impossibly may meet 360
Some specious object by the foe suborn'd,
And fall into deception unaware,
Not keeping strictest watch, as she was warn'd.
Seek not temptation then, which to avoid
Were better, and most likely if from me 365
Thou severe not: trial will come unfought.
Wouldst thou approve thy constancy, approve
First thy obedience; th' other who can know,
Not seeing thee attempted, who attest?
But if thou think, trial unfought may find 370
Us both securer than thus warn'd thou seem'st,

Go ; for thy stay, not free, absents thee more ;
Go in thy native innocence, rely
On what thou hast of virtue, summon all,
For God tow'rs thee hath done his part, do thine.

So spake the patriarch of mankind ; but Eve 376
Persisted, yet submits, though last, reply'd.

With thy permission then, and thus forwarn'd
Chiefly by what thy own last reasoning words
Touch'd only, that our trial, when least sought, 380
May find us both perhaps far less prepar'd,
The willinger I go, nor much expect

A foe so proud will first the weaker seek ;
So bent, the more shall shame him his repulse.

Thus saying, from her husband's hand her hand 285
Soft she withdrew, and like a wood-nymph light,
Oread or Dryad, or of Delia's train,

Betook her to the groves, but Delia's self
In gait surpass'd, and goddess-like deport,
Though not as she with bow and quiver arm'd, 390

But with such gard'ning tools as art yet rude,
Guileless of fire, had form'd, or angels brought.

To Pales, or Pomona, thus adorn'd,
Likest she seem'd, Pomona when she fled
Vertumnus, or to Ceres in her prime, 395

Yet virgin of Proserpina from Jove.

Her long with ardent look his eye pursu'd
Delighted, but desiring more her stay.

Oft he to her his charge of quick return
Repeated ; she to him as oft engag'd 400

To be return'd by noon amid the bower,

And all things in best order to invite

Noontide repast, or afternoon's repose.

O much deceiv'd, much failing hapless Eve,
Of thy presum'd return ! event perverse ! 405

Thou never from that hour in Paradise

Found'st either sweet repast, or sound repose ;

Such ambush hid among sweet flow'rs and shades

Waited with hellish rancour imminent

To intercept thy way, or send thee back 410

Despoil'd of innocence, of faith, of bliss.

For now, and since first break of dawn, the fiend,

Mere serpent in appearance, forth was come,

And on his quest, where likeliest he might find

The only two of mankind, but in them
The whole included race, his purpos'd prey. 415
In bow'r and field he fought, where any tuft
Of grove or garden-plot more pleasant lay,
Their tendence or plantation for delight ;
By fountain or by shady rivulet 420
He fought them both, but wish'd his hap might find
Eve separate ; he wish'd, but not with hope
Of what so seldom chanc'd, when to his wish,
Beyond his hope, Eve separate he spies,
Veil'd in a cloud of fragrance, where she stood, 425
Half spy'd, so thick the roses blushing round
About her glow'd ; oft stooping to support
Each flow'r of slender stalk, whose head, though gay
Carnation, purple, azure, or speck'd with gold,
Hung drooping unsustain'd ; them she upstays 430
Gently with myrtle band ; mindless the while
Herself, though fairest unsupported flower,
From her best prop so far, and storm so nigh.
Nearer he drew, and many a walk travers'd
Of stateliest covert, cedar, pine, or palm, 435
Then voluble and bold, now hid, now seen
Among thick-woven arborets and flow'rs
Imborder'd on each bank, the hand of Eve :
Spot more delicious than those gardens feign'd
Or of reviv'd Adonis, or renown'd 440
Alcinous, host of old Laertes' son ;
Or that, not mystic, where the sapient king
Held dalliance with his fair Egyptian spouse.
Much he the place admir'd, the person more.
As one who long in populous city pent, 445
Where houses thick and sewers annoy the air,
Forth issuing, on a summer's morn to breathe
Among the pleasant villages and farms
Adjoin'd, from each thing met conceives delight,
The smell of grain, or tedded grass, or kine, 450
Or dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound ;
If chance with nymph-like step fair virgin pass,
What pleasing seem'd, for her now pleases more,
She most, and in her look sums all delight :
Such pleasure took the serpent to behold 455
This flow'ry plot, the sweetest recess of Eve
Thus early, thus alone ; her heav'nly form

Angelic, but more soft and feminine,
Her graceful innocence, her ev'ry air
Of gesture, or least action, overaw'd 460
His malice, and with rapine sweet bereav'd
His fierceness of the fierce intent it brought:
That space the evil-one abstracted stood
From his own evil, and for the time remain'd
Stupidly good, of enmity disarm'd, 465
Of guile, of hate, of envy, of revenge;
But the hot Hell that always in him burns
Though in mid Heav'n, soon ended his delight,
And tortures him now more, the more he fees
Of pleasure not for him ordain'd: then soon 470
Fierce hate he recollects, and all his thoughts
Of mischief, gratulating, thus excites.

Thoughts, whither have ye led me! with what sweet
Compulsion thus transported, to forget
What hither brought us! hate, not love, nor hope 475
Of Paradise for Hell, hope here to taste
Of pleasure, but all pleasure to destroy,
Save what is in destroying; other joy
To me is lost. Then let me not let pass
Occasion which now smiles; behold alone 480
The woman, opportune to all attempts,
Her husband, for I view far round, not nigh,
Whose higher intellectual more I shun,
And strength, of courage haughty, and of limb
Heroic built, though of terrestrial mold, 485
Foe not formidable, exempt from wound,
I not; so much hath Hell debas'd, and pain
Infeebled me, to what I was in Heav'n.
She fair, divinely fair, fit love for gods,
Not terrible, though terror be in love 490
And beauty, not approach'd by stronger hate,
Hate stronger, under show of love well feign'd,
The way which to her ruin now I tend.

So spake the enemy of mankind, inclos'd
In serpent, inmate bad, and toward Eve 495
Address'd his way, not with indented wave,
Prone on the ground, as since, but on his rear,
Circular base of rising folds, that tower'd
Fold above fold a surging maze, his head
Crested aloft, and carbuncle his eyes; 500

With burnish'd neck of verdant gold, erect
 Amidst his circling spires, that on the grafs
 Floated redundant: pleasing was his shape
 And lovely; never since of serpent kind
 Lovelier, not those that in Illyria chang'd 505
 Hermione and Cadmus, or the god
 In Epidaurus; nor to which transform'd
 Amonian Jove, or Capitoline was seen,
 He with Olympias, this with her who bore
 Scipio the highth of Rome. With tract oblique 510
 At first, as one who sought access, but fear'd
 To interrupt, side-long he works his way.
 As when a ship by skilful steersman wrought
 Nigh river's mouth or foreland, where the wind
 Veers oft, as oft so steers, and shifts her sail: 515
 So varied he, and oft his tortuous train
 Curl'd many a wanton wreath in sight of Eve,
 To lure her eye; she busied heard the sound
 Of rustling leaves; but minded not, as us'd
 To such disport before her through the field, 520
 From every beast, more duteous at her call,
 Than at Circean call the herd disguis'd.
 He bolder now, uncall'd before her stood,
 But as in gaze admiring: oft he bow'd
 His turret crest, and sleek enamell'd neck, 525
 Fawning, and lick'd the ground whereon she trod.
 His gentle dumb expression turn'd at length
 The eye of Eve to mark his play; he glad
 Of her attention gain'd, with serpent tongue
 Organic, or impulse of vocal air, 530
 His fraudulent temptation thus began.

Wonder not, sov'reign mistress, if perhaps
 Thou canst, who art sole wonder; much less arm
 Thy looks, the Heav'n of mildness, with disdain,
 Displeas'd that I approach thee thus, and gaze 535
 Insatiate, I thus single, nor have fear'd
 Thy awful brow, more awful thus retir'd.
 Fairest resemblance of thy Maker fair,
 Thee all things living gaze on, all things thine
 By gift, and thy celestial beauty adore 540
 With ravishment beheld, there best beheld
 Where universally admir'd; but here
 In this inclosure wild, these beasts among,

Beholders rude, and shallow to discern
Half what in thee is fair, one man except, 545
Who sees thee? (and what is one?) who should be seen
A goddess among gods, ador'd and serv'd
By angels numberless, thy daily train.

So glaz'd the tempter, and his proem tun'd;
Into the heart of Eve his words made way, 550
Though at the voice much marvelling at length
Not unamaz'd she thus in answer spake.

What may this mean? language of man pronounc'd
By tongue of brute, and human sense express'd?
The first at least of these I thought deny'd 555
To beasts, whom God on their creation-day
Created mute to all articulate sound:

The latter I demur, for in their looks
Much reason, and in their actions oft appears.
Thee, serpent, subtlest beast of all the field 560
I knew, but not with human voice indu'd;
Redouble then this miracle, and say,
How cam'st thou speakable of mute, and how
To me so friendly grown above the rest
Of brutal kind, that daily are in sight: 565
Say, for such wonder claims attention due.

To whom the guileful tempter thus reply'd.
Empress of this fair world, resplendent Eve,
Easy it is to me to tell thee all
What thou command'st, and right thou should'st be 570
obey'd:

I was at first as other beasts that graze
The trodden herb, of abject thoughts and low,
As was my food; nor aught but food discern'd
Or sex, and apprehended nothing high:
Till on a day roving the field, I chanc'd 575
A goodly tree far distant to behold
Loaden with fruit of fairest colours mix'd,
Ruddy and gold: I nearer drew to gaze;
When from the boughs a savoury odour blown,
Grateful to appetite, more pleas'd my sense 580
Than smell of sweetest fennel, or the teats
Of ewe or goat dropping with milk at ev'n,
Unfuck'd of lamb or kid, that tend their play.
To satisfy the sharp desire I had
Of tasting those fair apples, I resolv'd 585

Not to defer; hunger and thirst at once,
Pow'rful persuaders, quicken'd at the scent
Of that alluring fruit, urg'd me so keen.
About the mossy trunk I wound me soon,
For high from ground the branches would require 590
Thy utmost reach or Adam's: round the tree
All other beasts that saw, with like desire
Longing and envying stood, but could not reach.
Amid the tree now got, where plenty hung
Tempting so nigh, to pluck and eat my fill 595
I spar'd not, for such pleasure till that hour
At feed or fountain never had I found.
Sated at length, ere long I might perceive
Strange alteration in me, to degree
Of reason in my inward pow'rs, and speech 600
Wanted not long, though to this shape retain'd.
Thenceforth to speculations high or deep
I turn'd my thoughts, and with capacious mind,
Consider'd all things visible in Heaven,
Or earth, or middle, all things fair and good; 605
But all that fair and good in thy divine
Semblance, and in thy beauty's heav'nly ray
United I beheld; no fair to thine
Equivalent or second, which compell'd
Me thus, though importune perhaps, to come 610
And gaze, and worship thee of right declar'd
Sov'reign of creatures, universal dame.

So talk'd the spirited fly snake; and Eve
Yet more amaz'd, unwary thus reply'd.
Serpent, thy overpraising leaves in doubt 615
The virtue of that fruit, in thee first prov'd:
But say, where grows the tree, from hence how far?
For many are the trees of God that grow
In Paradise, and various, yet unknown
To us, in such abundance lies our choice, 620
As leaves a greater store of fruit untouch'd
Still hanging incorruptible, till men
Grow up to their provision, and more hands
Help to disburden Nature of her birth.

To whom the wily adder, blithe and glad. 625
Empress, the way is ready, and not long,
Beyond a row of myrtles, on a flat,
East by a fountain, one small thicket past

Of blowing myrrh and balm ; if thou accept
My conduct, I can bring thee hither soon. 630

Lead then said Eve. He leading swiftly roll'd
In tangles, and made intricate seem strait,
To mischief swift. Hope elevates, and joy
Brightens his crest ; as when a wand'ring fire,
Compact of unctuous vapour, which the night 635
Condenses, and the cold environs round,
Kindled through agitation to a flame,
Which oft, they say, some evil sp'rit attends,
Hovering, and blazing with delusive light,
Misleads th' amaz'd night-wand'rer from his way 640
To bogs and mires, and oft through pond or pool,
There swallow'd up and lost, from succour far.
So glister'd the dire snake, and into fraud
Led Eve our credulous mother, to the tree
Of prohibition, root of all our woe ; 645

Which when she saw, thus to her guide she spake.

Serpent, we might have spar'd our coming hither,
Fruitless to me, though fruit be here to excess ;
The credit of whose virtue rest with thee,
Wondrous indeed, if cause of such effects. 650

But of this tree we may not haste nor touch :
God so commanded, and left that command
Sole daughter of his voice ; the rest, we live
Law to ourselves, our reason is our law.

To whom the tempter guilefully reply'd. 655
Indeed ! hath God then said that of the fruit
Of all these garden-trees ye shall not eat,
Yet lords declar'd of all in earth or air ?

To whom thus Eve yet sinless. Of the fruit
Of each tree in the garden we may eat 660
But of the fruit of this fair tree amidst
The garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat
Thereof, nor shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

She scarce had said, tho' brief, when now more bold
The tempter, but with show of zeal and love 665
To man, and indignation at his wrong,
New part puts on ; and as to passion mov'd,
Fluctuates disturb'd, yet comely and in act
Rais'd, as of some great matter to begin.
As when of old some orator renown'd 670
In Athens or free Rome, where eloquence

Flourish'd, since mute, to some great cause address'd,
Stood in himself collected, while each part,
Motion, each act won audience ere the tongue,
Sometimes in highth began, as no delay 675
Of preface brooking through his zeal of right:
So standing, moving, or to highth up grown,
The tempter all impassion'd thus began.

O sacred, wise, and wisdom-giving plant,
Mother of science, now I feel thy pow'r 680
Within me clear, not only to discern
Things in their causes, but to trace the ways
Of highest agents, deem'd however wise.

Queen of this universe, do not believe
Those rigid threats of death; ye shall not die: 685
How should ye? by the fruit? it gives you life
To knowledge; by the threatner? look on me,
Me who have touch'd and tasted, yet both live,
And life more perfect have attain'd than fate
Meant me, by vent'ring higher than my lot. 690

Shall that be shut to man, which to the beast
Is open? or will God incense his ire
For such a petty trespass, and not praise
Rather your dauntless virtue, whom the pain
Of death denounc'd, whatever thing death be, 695
Deterr'd not from atchieving what might lead
To happier life, knowledge of good and evil;

Of good, how just? of evil, if what is evil
Be real, why not known, since easier shunn'd?
God therefore cannot hurt ye, and be just; 700
Not just, not God; not fear'd then, nor obey'd:
Your fear itself of death removes the fear.

Why then was this forbid? Why but to awe,
Why but to keep you low and ignorant,
His worshippers; he knows that in the day 705
Ye eat thereof, your eyes that seem so clear,
Yet are but dim, shall perfectly be then
Open'd and clear'd, and ye shall be as gods,
Knowing both good and evil as they know.

That ye shall be as gods, since I as man, 710
Internal man, is but proportion meet;
I of brute human, ye of human gods.
So ye shall die perhaps, by putting off
Human, to put on gods; death to be wish'd,

Though threaten'd, which no worse than this can bring.
And what are gods that man may not become 716
As they, participating godlike food?
The gods are first, and that advantage use
On our belief, that all from them proceeds;
I question it, for this fair earth I see, 720
Warm'd by the sun, producing every kind,
Them nothing: if they all things, who inclos'd
Knowledge of good and evil in this tree,
That whoſo eats thereof, forthwith attains
Wisdom without their leave? and wherein lies 725
Th' offence, that man ſhould thus attain to know?
What can your knowledge hurt him, or this tree
Impart againſt his will, if all be his?
Or is it envy, and can envy dwell
In heav'nly breasts? theſe, theſe and many more 730
Causes import your need of this fair fruit.
Goddeſs humane, reach then, and freely taſte.

He ended, and his words replete with guile
Into her heart too eaſy entrance won:
Fix'd on the fruit ſhe gaz'd, which to behold 735
Might tempt alone, and in her ears the ſound
Yet rung of his perſuaſive words, impregn'd
With reaſon, to her ſeeming, and with truth;
Mean while the hour of noon drew one, and wak'd
An eager appetite, rais'd by the ſmell 740
So ſavoury of that fruit, which with deſire,
Inclinable now grown to touch or taſte,
Solicited her longing eye; yet firſt
Pausing a while, thus to herſelf ſhe muſ'd.

Great are thy virtues, doubtleſs, beſt of fruits, 745
Though kept from man, and worthy to be admir'd,
Whoſe taſte, too long forborn, at firſt aſſay
Gave elocution to the mute, and taught
The tongue not made for ſpeech to ſpeak thy praife:
Thy praife he alſo who forbids thy uſe, 750
Conceals not from us, naming thee the tree
Of knowledge, knowledge both of good and evil;
Forbids us then to taſte, but his forbidding
Commends thee more, while it infers the good
By thee communicated, and our want: 755
For good unknown, ſure is not had, or had
And yet unknown, is as not had at all.

In plain then, what forbids he but to know,
Forbids us good, forbids us to be wise?
Such prohibitions binds not. But if death 760
Binds us with after-bands, what profits then
Our inward freedom? in the day we eat
Of this fair fruit, our doom is, we shall die.
How dies the serpent? he hath eaten and lives,
And knows, and speaks, and reasons, and discerns, 765
Irrational till then. For us alone

Was death invented? or to us deny'd
This intellectual food, for beasts reserv'd?
For beasts it seems: yet that one beast which first
Hath tasted, envies not, but brings with joy 770
The good befall'n him, author unsuspect,
Friendly to man, far from deceit or guile.
What fear I then, rather what know to fear
Under this ignorance of good and evil,
Of God or death, of law or penalty? 775

Here grows the cure of all, this fruit divine,
Fair to the eye, inviting to the taste,
Of virtue to make wise: what hinders then
To reach, and feed at once both body and mind?

So saying, her rash hand in evil hour 780
Forth reaching to the fruit, she pluck'd, she eat:
Earth felt the wound, and Nature from her seat,
Sighing through all her works gave signs of woe,
That all was lost. Back to the thicket slunk
The guilty serpent: and well might, for Eve 785
Intent now wholly on her taste, nought else
Regarded, such delight till then, as seem'd,
In fruit she never tasted, whether true
Or fancy'd so, through expectation high

Of knowledge: nor was Godhead from her thought. 790
Greedy she ingorg'd without restraint,
And knew not eating death. Sate at length,
And highten'd as with wine, jocund and boon,
Thus to herself she pleasingly began.

O sov'reign, virtuous, precious of all trees 795
In Paradise, of operation blest'd
To sapience, hitherto obscur'd, infam'd,
And thy fair fruit let hang, as to no end
Created; but henceforth my early care,
Not without song, each morning, and due praise, 800

Shall tend thee, and the fertile burden ease
Of thy full branches, offer'd free to all;
Till dieted by thee I grow mature
In knowledge, as the gods, who all things know;
Though others envy what they cannot give; 805
For had the gift been theirs, it had not here
Thus grown. Experience, next to thee I owe,
Best guide; not following thee I had remain'd
In ignorance; thou open'st wisdom's way,
And giv'st access, though secret she retire. 810
And I perhaps am secret; Heav'n is high,
High and remote to see from thence distinct
Each thing on earth; and other care perhaps
May have diverted from continual watch
Our great forbidding, safe with all his spies 815
About him. But to Adam in what sort
Shall I appear? shall I to him make known
As yet my change, and give him to partake
Full happiness with me; or rather not,
But keep the odds of knowledge in my pow'r, 820
Without copartner? so to add what wants
In female sex, the more to draw his love,
And render me more equal, and perhaps,
A thing not undesireable, some time
Superior; for inferior who is free? 825
This may be well. But what if God have seen,
And death ensue? then I shall be no more,
And Adam wedded to another Eve,
Shall live with her enjoying, I extinct;
A death to think. Confirm'd then I resolve, 830
Adam shall share with me in bliss or woe:
So dear I love him, that with him all deaths
I could endure, without him live no life.

So saying, from the tree her step she turn'd;
But first low rev'rence done, as to the pow'r 835
That dwelt within, whose presence had infus'd
Into the plant scintial sap, derived
From nectar, drink of gods. Adam the while
Waiting desirous her return, had wove
Of choicest flow'rs a garland to adorn 840
Her tresses, and her rural labours crown,
As reapers oft are wont their harvest queen.
Great joy he promis'd to his thoughts, and new

Solace in her return, so long delay'd :
Yet oft his heart, divine of something ill, 845
Mistake him ; he the salt'ring measure felt ;
And forth to meet her went, the way she took
That morn when first they parted ; by the tree
Of knowledge he must pass ; there he her met,
Scarce from the tree returning ; in her hand 850
A bough of fairest fruit, that downy smil'd,
New gather'd, and ambrosial smell diffus'd.
To him she hasted ; in her face excuse
Came prologue, and apology too prompt,
Which with bland words at will she thus address'd. 855
Hast thou not wonder'd, Adam, at my stay ?
Thee I have miss'd, and thought it long, depriv'd
Thy presence, agony of love till now
Not felt, nor shall be twice ; for never more
Mean I to try, what rash untry'd I sought, 860
The pain of absence from thy sight. But strange
Hath been the cause, and wonderful to hear :
This tree is not, as we are told, a tree
Of danger tasted, nor to evil unknown
Op'ning the way, but of divine effect 865
To open eyes, and make them gods who taste ;
And hath been tasted such : the serpent wise,
Or not restrain'd as we, or not obeying,
Hath eaten of the fruit, and is become,
Not dead, as we are threaten'd, but thenceforth 870
Endu'd with human voice and human sense,
Reasoning to admiration, and with me
Persuasively hath so prevail'd, that I
Have also tasted, and have also found
Th' effects to correspond ; opener mine eyes, 875
Dim erst, dilated spirits, ampler heart,
And growing up to godhead ; which for thee
Chiefly I sought, without thee can despise.
For bliss, as thou hast part, to me is bliss ;
Tedious, unshar'd with thee, and odious soon. 880
Thou therefore also taste, that equal lot
May join us, equal joy, as equal love ;
Lest thou not tasting, different degree
Disjoin us, and I then too late renounce
Deity for thee, when fate will not permit. 885
Thus Eve with count'nance blithe her story told ;

But in her check dissemper flushing glow'd.
 On the other side, Adam, soon as he heard
 The fatal trespass done by Eve, amaz'd,
 Astonied stood and blank, while horror chill 890
 Ran through his veins, and all his joints relax'd;
 From his slack hand the garland wreath'd for Eve
 Down dropt, and all the faded roses shed:
 Speechless he stood and pale; till thus at length
 First to himself he inward silence broke. 895

O fairest of creation, last and best
 Of all God's works, creature in whom excell'd
 Whatever can to sight or thought be form'd,
 Holy, divine, good, amiable, or sweet!
 How art thou lost, how on a sudden lost, 900
 Defac'd, deflow'r'd, and now to death devote?
 Rather how hast thou yielded to transgress
 The strict forbiddance, how to violate
 The sacred fruit forbidden? some cursed fraud
 Of enemy hath beguil'd thee, yet unknown, 905
 And me with thee hath ruin'd; for with thee
 Certain my resolution is to die;
 How can I live without thee, how forego
 Thy sweet converse and love so dearly join'd,
 To live again in these wild woods forlorn? 910
 Should God create another Eve, and I
 Another rib afford, yet loss of thee
 Would never from my heart; no, no, I feel
 The link of nature draw me: flesh of flesh,
 Bone of my bone thou art, and from thy state 915
 Mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe.

So having said, as one from sad dismay
 Recomforted; and after thoughts disturb'd
 Submitting to what seem'd remediless,
 Thus in calm mood his words to Eve he turn'd. 920

Bold deed thou hast presum'd, advent'rous Eve,
 And peril great provok'd, who thus hast dar'd,
 Had it been only coveting to eye
 That sacred fruit, sacred to abstinence,
 Much more to taste it, under ban to touch. 925
 But past who can recal, or done undo?
 Not God omnipotent, nor fate; yet so
 Perhaps thou shalt not die, perhaps the fact
 Is not so heinous now, foretasted fruit,

Profan'd first by the serpent, by him first
Made common and unhallow'd ere our taste;
Nor yet on him found deadly; he yet lives,
Lives, as thou saidst, and gains to live, as man,
Higher degree of life; inducement strong
To us, as likely tasting to attain
Proportional ascent, which cannot be
But to be gods, or angels, demi-gods.
Nor can I think that God, Creator wise,
Though threat'ning, will in earnest so destroy
Us his prime creatures, dignify'd so high,
Set over all his works, which in our fall,
For us created, needs with us must fail,
Dependent made: so God shall uncreate,
Be frustrate, do, undo, and labour lose;
Not well conceiv'd of God, who though his pow'r
Creation could repeat, yet would be loath
Us to abolish, lest the adversary
Triumph, and say, Fickle their state whom God
Most favours; who can please him long? Me first
He ruin'd, now mankind; whom will he next?
Matter of scorn, not to be giv'n the foe.
However, I with thee have fix'd my lot,
Certain to undergo like doom: if death
Confort with thee, death is to me as life;
So forcible within my heart I feel
The bond of nature draw to me my own,
My own in thee, for what thou art is mine;
Our state cannot be sever'd, we are one,
One flesh; to lose thee were to lose myself.
So Adam, and thus Eve to him reply'd
O glorious trial of exceeding love,
Illustrious evidence, example high!
Engaging me to emulate; but short
Of thy perfection, how shall I attain,
Adam? from whose dear side I boast me sprung,
And gladly of our union hear thee speak,
One heart, one soul in both; whereof good proof
This day affords, declaring thee resolv'd,
Rather than death, or aught than death more dread
Shall separate us, link'd in love so dear,
To undergo with me one guilt, one crime,
If any be, of tasting this fair fruit,

Whose virtue (for of good still good proceeds,
Direct, or by occasion) hath presented
This happy trial of thy love, which else 975
So eminently never had been known.

Were it I thought death menac'd would ensue
This my attempt, I would sustain alone
The worst, and not persuade thee; rather die
Deserted, than oblige thee with a fact 880
Pernicious to thy peace; chiefly assur'd
Remarkably so late of thy so true,
So faithful love unequall'd: but I feel
Far otherwise th' event, not death, but life
Augmented, open'd eyes, new hopes, new joys, 985
Taste so divine, that what of sweet before
Hath touch'd my sense, flat seems to this, and harsh.
On my experience, Adam, freely taste,
And fear of death deliver to the winds.

So saying, she embrac'd him, and for joy 990
Tenderly wept; much won that he his love
Had so ennobled, as of choice to incur
Divine displeasure for her sake, or death.
In recompense (for such compliance bad
Such recompense best merits) from the bough 995
She gave him of that fair inticing fruit
With liberal hand: he scrupled not to eat
Against his better knowledge, not deceiv'd,
But fondly overcome with female charm.
Earth trembled from her entrails, as again 1000
In pangs, and Nature gave a second groan;
Sky lowr'd, and muttering thunder, some sad drops
Wept at completing of the mortal sin
Original; while Adam took no thought,
Eating his fill; nor Eve to iterate 1005
Her former trespass fear'd, the more to sooth
Him with her lov'd society; that now,
As with new wine intoxicated both,
They swim in mirth, and fancy that they feel
Divinity within them breeding wings 1010
Wherewith to scorn the earth: but that false fruit
Far other operation first display'd,
Carnal desire inflaming; he on Eve
Began to cast lascivious eyes, she him
As wantonly repaid; in lust they burn: 1015
Till Adam thus 'gan Eve to dalliance move.

Eve, now I see thou art exact of taste,
And elegant, of sapience no small part,
Since to each meaning favour we apply,
And palate call judicious: I the praise 1020
Yield thee, so well this day thou hast purvey'd.
Much pleasure we have lost, while we abstain'd
From this delightful fruit, nor known till now
True relish, tasting; if such pleasure be
In things to us forbidden, it might be wish'd, 1025
For this one tree had been forbidden ten.
But come, so well refresh'd, now let us play,
As meet is, after such delicious fare;
For never did thy beauty, since the day
I saw thee first and wedded thee, adorn'd 1030
With all perfections, so inflame my sense
With ardour to enjoy thee, fairer now
Than ever, bounty of this virtuous tree.

So said he, and forbore not glance or toy
Of amorous intent, well understood 1035
Of Eve, whose eye darted contagious fire.
Her hand he seiz'd, and to a shady bank,
Thick overhead with verdant roof imbow'r'd,
He lead her nothing loath; flow'rs were the couch,
Pansies, and violets, and asphodel, 1040
And hyacinth, earth's freshest softest lap.
There they their fill of love and love's disport
Took largely, of their mutual guilt the seal,
The solace of their sin, till dewy sleep
Oppress'd them, wearied with their amorous play. 1045
Soon as the force of that fallacious fruit,
That with exhilarating vapour bland
About their sp'rits had play'd, and inmost pow'rs
Made err, was now exhal'd; and grosser sleep
Bred of unkindly fumes, with conscious dreams 1050
Incumber'd, now had left them; up they rose
As from unrest, and each the other viewing,
Soon found their eyes how open'd, and their minds
How darken'd; innocence, that as a veil
Had shadow'd them from knowing ill, was gone, 1055
Just confidence, and native righteousness,
And honour from about them, naked left
To guilty shame; he cover'd, but his robe
Uncover'd more. So rose the Danite strong

Herculean Samson from the harlot-lap 1060
Of Philistean Dalilah, and wak'd
Shorn of his strength ; they destitute and bare
Of all their virtue : silent, and in face
Confounded long they sat, as stricken mute,
Till Adam, though not less than Eve abash'd, 1065
At length gave utterance to these words constrain'd.

O Eve, in evil hour thou didst give ear
To that false worm, of whomsoever taught
To counterfeit man's voice ; true in our fall,
False in our promis'd rising ; since our eyes 1070
Open'd we find indeed, and find we know
Both good and evil, good lost, and evil got,
Bad fruit of knowledge, if this be to know,
Which leaves us naked thus, of honour void,
Of innocence, of faith, of purity, 1075
Our wonted ornaments, now soil'd and stain'd,
And in our faces evident the signs
Of foul concupiscence ; whence evil store ;
Ev'n shame, the last of evils ; of the first
Be sure then. How shall I behold the face 1080
Henceforth of God or angel, erst with joy
And rapture so oft beheld ? those heav'nly shapes
Will dazzle now this earthly with their blaze
Insufferably bright. O might I here
In solitude live savage, in some glade 1085
Obscur'd, where highest woods impenetrable
To star or sun-light, spread their umbrage broad
And brown as ev'ning : cover me, ye pines,
Ye cedars, with innumerable boughs
Hide me, where I may never see them more. 1090
But let us now, as in bad plight, devise
What best may for the present serve to hide
The parts of each from other, that seem most
To shame obnoxious, and unseemliest seen ;
Some tree, whose broad smooth leaves together sow'd
And girded on our lions, may cover round 1096
Those middle parts, that this new comer, shame,
There sit not, and reproach us as unclean.

So counsell'd he, and both together went
Into the thickest wood ; there soon they chuse 1100
The fig-tree, not that kind for fruit renown'd,
But such as at this day to Indians known
In Malabar or Decan, spreads her arms

Branching so broad and long, that in the ground
The bended twigs take root, and daughters grow 1105
About the mother-tree, a pillar'd shade
High overarch'd, and echoing walks between;
There oft the Indian herdsman, shunning heat,
Shelters in cool, and tends his pasturing herds
At loop-holes cut through thickest shade: those leaves
They gather'd, broad as Amazonian targe; 1111
And with what skill they had together sow'd,
To gird their waste; vain covering if to hide
Their guilt and dreaded shame; O how unlike
To that first naked glory! Such of late 1115
Columbus found th' American, so girt
With feather'd cincture, naked else and wild
Among the trees on isles and woody shores.
Thus fenc'd, and, as they thought, their shame in part
Cover'd; but not at rest or ease of mind, 1120
They sat them down to weep; nor only tears
Rain'd at their eyes, but high winds worse within
Began to rise, high passions, anger, hate,
Mistrust, suspicion, discord, and shook fore
Their inward state of mind, calm region once 1125
And full of peace, now tost and turbulent:
For understanding rul'd not, and the will
Heard not her lore, both in subjection now
To sensual appetite, who from beneath
Usurping over sov'reign reason, claim'd 1130
Superior sway; from thus distemper'd breast,
Adam, estrang'd in look and alter'd stile,
Speech intermitted thus to Eve renew'd.

Would thou hadst hearken'd to my words, and stay'd
With me, as I besought thee, when that strange 1135
Desire of wand'ring this unhappy morn,
I know not whence possess'd thee; we had then
Remain'd still happy, not as now, despoil'd
Of all our good, sham'd, naked, miserable.

Let none henceforth seek needless cause to approve
The faith they owe; when earnestly they seek 1141
Such proof, conclude they then begin to fail.

To whom, soon mov'd with touch of blame, thus Eve.
What words have pass'd thy lips, Adam severe!
Imput'st thou that to my default, or will 1145
Of wand'ring, as thou call'st it, which who knows

But might as ill have happen'd thou being by,
 Or to thyself perhaps? Hadst thou been there,
 Or here th' attempt, thou couldst not have discern'd
 Fraud in the serpent, speaking as he spake; 1150

No ground of enmity between us known,
 Why he should mean me ill, or seek to harm.

Was I to have ne'er parted from thy side?

As good have grown there still a lifeless rib.

Being as I am, why didst not thou the head 1155

Command me absolutely not to go,

Going into such danger as thou saidst?

Too facile then thou didst not much gainsay,

Nay didst permit, approve, and fair dismiss.

Hadst thou been firm and fix'd in thy dissent, 1160

Neither had I transgress'd, nor thou with me.

To whom then first incens'd Adam reply'd.

Is this the love, is this the recompense

Of mine to thee, ingrateful Eve, express'd

Immutable when thou wert lost, not I; 1165

Who might have liv'd and joy'd immortal bliss,

Yet willingly chose rather death with thee?

And I am now upbraided as the cause

Of thy transgressing? not enough severe,

It seems, in thy restraint: what could I more? 1170

I warn'd thee, I admonish'd thee, foretold

The danger, and the lurking enemy

That lay in wait; beyond this had been force,

And force upon free will hath here no place.

But confidence then bore thee on, secure 1175

Either to meet no danger, or to find

Matter of glorious trial: and perhaps

I also err'd in overmuch admiring

What seem'd in thee so perfect, that I thought

No evil durst attempt thee; but I rue 1180

That error now, which is become my crime,

And thou th' accuser. Thus it shall befall

Him who to worth in women overtrusting,

Lets her will rule; restraint she will not brook,

And left to herself, if evil thence ensue, 1185

She first his weak indulgence will accuse.

Thus they in mutual accusation spent

The fruitless hours, but neither self-condemning,

And of their vain contest appear'd no end.

End of the Ninth Book.

THE ARCUMET.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK X.

THE ARGUMENT.

Man's transgression known; the guardian angels forsake Paradise, and return up to Heaven to approve their vigilance; and are approved, God declaring that the entrance of Satan could not be by them prevented. He sends his Son to judge the transgressors; who descends, and gives sentence accordingly; then in pity clothes them both, and reascends. Sin and Death, sitting till then at the gates of Hell, by wondrous sympathy feeling the success of Satan in this new world, and the sin by man there committed, resolve to sit no longer confin'd in Hell, but to follow Satan their sire up to the place of man: To make the way easier from Hell to this world to and fro, they pave a broad high-way or bridge over Chaos, according to the track that Satan first made; then preparing for earth, they meet him, proud of his success, returning to Hell; their mutual gratulation. Satan arrives at Pandemonium, in full assembly relates with boasting his success against man; instead of applause, is entertained with a general hiss by all his audience, transform'd with himself also suddenly into serpents, according to his doom given in Paradise; then deluded with a show of the forbidden tree springing up before them, they greedily reaching to take of the fruit, chew dust and bitter ashes. The proceedings of Sin and Death: God foretels the final victory of his Son over them, and the renewing of all things; but for the present commands his angels to make several alterations in the the heavens and elements. Adam more and more perceiving his fallen condition, heavily bewails; rejects the condolment of Eve; she persists, and at length appeases him: then to evade the curse likely to fall on their offspring, proposes to Adam violent ways, which he approves not, but conceiving better hope, puts her in mind of the late promise made them, that her seed should be revenged on the Serpent, and exhorts her with him to seek peace of the offended Deity, by repentance and supplication.

PARADISE LOST.

B O O K X.

MEAN while the heinous and deispiteful act
Of Satan done in Paradise, and how
He in the serpent had perverted Eve,
Her husband she, to taste the fatal fruit,
Was known in Heav'n; for what can 'scape the eye 5
Of God all-seeing, or deceive his heart
Omniscient? who in all things wise and just,
Hinder'd not Satan to attempt the mind
Of man, with strength entire, and free-will arm'd,
Complete to have discover'd and repuls'd 10
Whatever wiles of foe or seeming friend.
For still they knew, and ought to have still remember'd
The high injunction not to taste that fruit,
Whoever tempted: which they not obeying,
Incurr'd (what could they less?) the penalty, 15
And manifold in sin, deserv'd to fall.
Up into Heav'n from Paradise in haste
Th' angelic guards ascended, mute and sad
For man; for of his state by this they knew,
Much wond'ring how the subtle fiend had stol'n 20
Entrance unseen. Soon as th' unwelcome news
From earth arriv'd at Heav'n-gate, displeas'd
All were who heard; dim sadness did not spare
That time celestial visages, yet mix'd
With pity, violated not their blifs. 25
About the new arriv'd, in multitudes
Th' ethereal people ran, to hear and know

How all beset: they tow'rs the throne supreme
 Accountable made haste, to make appear
 With righteous plea their utmost vigilance, 30
 And easily approv'd; when the most high
 Eternal Father, from his secret cloud,
 Amidst in thunder utter'd thus his voice.

Assembled angels, and ye pow'rs return'd
 From unsuccessful charge, be not dismay'd, 35
 Nor troubled at these tidings from the earth,
 Which your sincerest care could not prevent,
 Foretold so lately what would come to pass,
 When first this tempter cross'd the gulf from Hell.
 I told you then he should prevail and speed 40
 On his bad errand, man should be seduc'd
 And flatter'd out of all, believing lies
 Against his Maker; no decree of mine
 Concurring to necessitate his fall,
 Or touch with lightest moment of impulse 45
 His free will, to her own inclining left
 In even scale. But fall'n he is, and now
 What rests, but that the mortal sentence pass
 On his transgression, death denounc'd that day?
 Which he presumes already vain and void, 50
 Because not yet inflicted, as he fear'd,
 By some immediate stroke; but soon shall find
 Forbearance no acquittance ere day end.
 Justice shall not return as bounty scorn'd.
 But whom send I to judge them? whom but thee 55
 Vicegerent Son? to thee I have transferr'd
 All judgment, whether in Heav'n, or Earth, or Hell.
 Easy it may be seen that I intend
 Mercy colleague with justice, sending thee,
 Man's friend, his mediator, his design'd 60
 Both ransom and redeemer voluntary,
 And destin'd Man himself to judge man fall'n.

So spake the Father, and unfolding bright
 Toward the right hand his glory, on the Son
 Blaz'd forth unclouded deity; he full 65
 Resplendent all his Father manifest
 Express, and thus divinely answer'd mild.

Father eternal, thine is to decree,
 Mine both in Heav'n and earth to do thy will
 Supreme, that thou in me thy Son lov'd 70

May'st ever rest well pleas'd. I go to judge
On earth these thy transgressors; but thou know'st,
Whoever judg'd, the worst on me must light,
When time shall be; for so I undertook
Before thee; and not repenting, this obtain 75
Of right, that I may mitigate their doom
On me driv'd; yet I shall temper so
Justice with mercy, as may illustrate most
Them fully satisfy'd, and thee appease.
Attendance none shall need, nor train, where none 80
Are to behold the judgment, but the judg'd,
Those two; the third best absent is condemn'd,
Convict by flight, and rebel to all law:
Conviction to the serpent none belongs.

Thus saying, from his radiant seat he rose 85
Of high collateral glory: him thrones and powers,
Princedom, and dominations ministrant
Accompanied to Heaven-gate, from whence
Eden and all the coast in prospect lay.
Down he descended strait; the speed of Gods 90
Time counts not, though with swiftest minutes wing'd.
Now was the sun in western cadence low,
From noon, and gentle airs due at their hour
To fan the earth now wak'd, and usher in
The evening cool, when he from wrath more cool, 95
Came the mild judge and intercessor both,
To sentence man: the voice of God they heard
Now walking in the garden, by soft winds
Brought to their ears, while day declin'd; they heard,
And from his presence hid themselves among 100
The thickest trees, both man and wife; till God
Approaching, thus to Adam call'd aloud.
Where art thou, Adam, wont with joy to meet
My coming seen far off? I miss thee here,
Not pleas'd, thus entertain'd with solitude, 105
Where obvious duty erewhile appear'd unsought:
Or come I less conspicuous, or what change
Absents thee, or what chance detains? Come forth.

He came, and with him Eve, more loath, though first
To offend, discount'nanc'd both, and discompos'd; 110
Love was not in their looks, either to God
Or to each other, but apparent guilt,
And shame, and perturbation, and despair,

Anger, and obstinacy, and hate, and guile.
Whence Adam fault'ring long, thus answer'd brief. 115
I heard thee in the garden, and of thy voice
Afraid, being naked, hid myself. To whom
The gracious Judge without revile reply'd.
My voice thou oft hast heard, and hast not fear'd,
But still rejoic'd; how is it now become 120
So dreadful to thee? that thou art naked, who
Hath told thee? hast thou eaten of the tree,
Whereof I gave thee charge thou should'st not eat?

To whom thus Adam sore beset reply'd.
O Heav'n! in evil strait this day I stand 125
Before my Judge, either to undergo
Myself the total crime, or to accuse
My other self, the partner of my life:
Whose failing, while her faith to me remains,
I should conceal, and not expose to blame 130
By my complaint; but strict necessity
Subdues me, and calamitous constraint,
Lest on my head both sin and punishment,
However unsupportable, be all
Devolv'd; though should I hold my peace, yet thou 135
Wouldst easily detect what I conceal.
This woman whom thou mad'st to be my help,
And gav'st me as thy perfect gift, so good,
So fit, so acceptable, so divine,
That from her hand I could suspect no ill, 140
And what she did, whatever in itself,
Her doing seem'd to justify the deed;
She gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

To whom the Sov'rign Presence thus reply'd.
Was she thy God, that her thou didst obey 145
Before his voice? or was she made thy guide,
Superior, or but equal, that to her
Thou didst resign thy manhood, and the place
Wherein God set thee above her made of thee,
And for thee, whose perfections far excell'd 150
Hers in all real dignity? Adorn'd
She was indeed, and lovely to attract
Thy love, not thy subjection; and her gifts
Were such as under government well seem'd,
Unseemly to bear rule, which was thy part 155
And person; hadst thou known thyself aright,

So having said, he thus to Eve in few.

Say, woman, what is this which thou hast done?

To whom sad Eve, with shame nigh overwhelm'd,
Confessing soon, yet not before her judge 160

Bold or loquacious, thus abash'd reply'd.

The serpent me beguil'd, and I did eat.

Which when the Lord God heard, without delay

To judgment he proceeded on th' accus'd

Serpent, though brute, unable to transfer 165

The guilt on him who made him instrument

Of mischief, and polluted from the end

Of his creation; justly then accurs'd,

As vitiated in nature: more to know

Concern'd not man (since he no further knew) 170

Nor alter'd his offence; yet God at last

To Satan, first in sin, his doom apply'd,

Though in mysterious terms, judg'd as then best:

And on the serpent thus his curse let fall.

Because thou hast done this, thou art accurs'd 175

Above all cattle, each beast of the field;

Upon thy belly groveling thou shalt go,

And dust shalt eat all the days of thy life.

Between thee and the woman I will put

Enmity, and between thine and her seed; 180

Her seed shall bruise thy head, thou bruise his heel.

So spake this oracle, then verify'd

When Jesus, son of Mary, second Eve,

Saw Satan fall like lightning down from Heav'n,

Prince of the air; then rising from his grave 185

Spoil'd principalities and pow'rs, triumph'd

In open show, and with ascension bright

Captivity led captive through the air,

The realm itself of Satan long usurp'd,

Whom he shall tread at last under our feet; 190

Ev'n he who now foretold his fatal bruise,

And to the woman thus his sentence turn'd.

Thy sorrow I will greatly multiply

By thy conception; children thou shalt bring

In sorrow forth; and to thy husband's will 195

Thine shall submit; he over thee shall rule.

On Adam last thus judgment he pronounc'd.

Because thou' hast hearken'd to th' voice of thy wife,

And eaten of the tree, concerning which

I charg'd thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat thereof: 200
Curs'd is the ground for thy sake; thou in sorrow
Shalt eat thereof all the days of thy life;
Thorns also and thistles it shall bring thee forth
Unbid; and thou shalt eat th' herb of the field,
In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, 205
Till thou return unto the ground; for thou
Out of the ground was taken; know thy birth,
For dust thou art, and shalt to dust return.

So judg'd he man, both Judge and Saviour sent,
And th' instant stroke of death denounc'd that day 210
Remov'd far off; then pitying how they stood
Before him naked to the air, that now
Must suffer change, disdain'd not to begin
Thenceforth the form of servant to assume,
As when he wash'd his servants feet, so now, 215
As father of his family, he clad
Their nakedness with skins of beasts, or slain,
Or as the snake with youthful coat repaid;
And thought not much to clothe his enemies:
Nor he their outward only with the skins 220
Of beasts, but inward nakedness, much more
Opprobrious, with his robe of righteousness,
Arraying cover'd from his Father's sight.
To him with swift ascent he up return'd,
Into his blissful bosom reassum'd 225
In glory as of old; to him appeas'd
All, though all-knowing, what had pass'd with man
Recounted, mixing intercession sweet.

Mean while, ere thus was sinn'd and judg'd on earth,
Within the gates of Hell sat Sin and Death, 230
In counterview within the gates, that now
Stood open wide, belching outrageous flame
Far into Chaos, since the fiend pass'd through,
Sin opening, who thus now to Death began.

O son, why sit we here each other viewing 235
Idly, while Satan, our great author, thrives
In other worlds, and happier seat provides
For us his offspring dear? It cannot be
But that success attends him; if mishap,
Ere this he had return'd, with fury driven 240
By his avengers, since no place like this,
Can fit his punishment, or their revenge.

Methinks I feel new strength within me rise,
Wings growing, and dominion giv'n me large
Beyond this deep; whatever draws me on, 245
Or sympathy, or some connat'ral force,
Pow'rful at greatest distance to unite
With secret amity things of like kind
By secretest conveyance, Thou, my shade
Inseparable, must with me along: 250
For Death from Sin no pow'r can separate.
But, least the difficulty of passing back
Stay his return perhaps over this gulf
Impassable, impervious, let us try
Advent'rous work, yet to thy pow'r and mine 255
Not unagreeable, to found a path
Over this main from Hell to that new world
Where Satan now prevails; a monument
Of merit high to all the infernal host,
Easing their passage hence, for intercourse, 260
Or transmigration, as their lot shall lead.
Nor can I miss the way, so strongly drawn
By this new felt attraction and instinct.

Whom thus the meager shadow answer'd soon.
Go whither fate and inclination strong 265
Leads thee; I shall not lag behind, nor err
The way, thou leading; such a scent I draw
Of carnage, prey innumerable, and taste
The favour of Death from all things there that live:
Nor shall I to the work thou enterprisest 270
Be wanting, but afford thee equal aid.

So saying, with delight he snuff'd the smell
Of mortal change on earth. As when a flock
Of ravenous fowl, though many a league remote,
Against the day of battle, to a field, 275
Where armies lie incamp'd, come flying, lur'd
With scent of living carcases design'd
For death, the following day, in bloody fight:
So scented the grim feature, and upturn'd
His nostril wide into the murky air, 280
Sagacious of his quarry from so far.
Then both from out Hell-gates into the waste
Wide anarchy of Chaos, damp and dark,
Flew diverse, and with pow'r (their pow'r was great)
Hovering upon the waters, what they met 285

Solid or slimy, as in raging sea
Toft up and down, together crouded drove,
From each fide shoaling tow' rds the mouth of Hell :
As when two polar winds, blowing adverfe
Upon the Cronian fea, together drive 290
Mountains of ice, that ftop th' imagin'd way
Beyond Petfora eastward, to the rich
Cathaian coast. The aggregated foil
Death with his mace petrific, cold and dry,
As with a trident fmote, and fix'd as firm 295
As Delos floating once ; the reft his look
Bound with Gorgonian rigour not to move ;
And with Asphaltic flime, broad as the gate,
Deep to the roots of Hell the gather'd beach
They faften'd, and the mole immense wrought on 300
Over the foaming deep high arch'd, a bridge
Of length prodigious, joining to the wall
Immoveable of this now fencelefs world
Forfeit to Death ; from hence a paffage broad,
Smooth, eafy, inoffenfive, down to Hell. 305
So, if great things to fmall may be compar'd,
Xerxes, the liberty of Greece to yoke,
From Sufa his Memnonian palace high
Came to the fea, and over Hellespont
Bridging his way, Europe with Afia join'd, 310
And fcourg'd with many a ftroke th' indignant waves.
Now had they brought the work by wondrous art
Pontifical, a ridge of pendent rock,
Over the vex'd abyfs, following the track
Of Satan to the felf-fame place where he 315
Firft lighted from his wing, and landed fafe
From out of Chaos, to the outside bare
Of this round world : with pins of adamant
And chains they made all faft ; too faft they made
And durable ; and now in little fpace 320
The confines met of empyrean Heav'n
And of this world, and on the left hand Hell
With long reach interpos'd ; three feveral ways
In fight, to each of thefe three places led.
And now their way to earth they had defcry'd, 325
To Paradife firft tending, when behold
Satan, in likenefs of an angel bright
Betwixt the Centaur and the Scorpion steering

His zenith, while the sun in Aries rose :
Disguis'd he came, but those his children dear 330
Their parent soon discern'd, though in disguise.
He, after Eve seduc'd, unminded flunk
Into the wood fast by, and changing shape
To observe the sequel, saw his guileful act
By Eve, though all unweeting, seconded 335
Upon her husband, saw their shame that sought
Vain covertures ; but when he saw descend
The Son of God to judge them, terrify'd
He fled, not hoping to escape, but shun
The present, fearing guilty what his wrath 440
Might suddenly inflict ; that past, return'd
By night, and list'ning where the hapless pair
Sat in their sad discourse, and various plaint,
Thence gather'd his own doom, which understood
Not instant, but of future time, with joy 345
And tidings fraught, to Hell he now return'd,
And at the brink of Chaos, near the foot
Of this new wondrous pontifice, unhop'd,
Met who to meet him came, his offspring dear.
Great joy was at their meeting, and at sight 350
Of that stupenduous bridge his joy increas'd.
Long he admiring stood, till Sin, his fair
Enchanting daughter, thus the silence broke.

O Parent, these are thy magnific deeds,
Thy trophies, which thou view'st as not thine own ; 355
Thou art their author, and prime architect :
For I no sooner in my heart divin'd,
My heart, which by a secret harmony
Still moves with thine, join'd in connexion sweet,
That thou on earth hadst prosper'd, which thy looks 360
Now also evidence, but strait I felt,
Though distant from thee worlds between, yet felt
That I must after thee with this thy son,
Such fatal consequence unites us three :
Hell could no longer hold us in her bounds, 365
Nor this unvoyageable gulf obscure
Detain from following thy illustrious track.
Thou hast atchiev'd our liberty, confin'd
Within Hell-gates till now ; thou us impower'd
To fortify thus far, and overlay 370
With this portentous bridge the dark abyss.

Thine now is all this world; thy virtue hath won
What thy hands builded not, thy wisdom gain'd
With odds what war hath lost, and fully aveng'd
Our foil in Heav'n; here thou shalt monarch reign, 375
There didst not; there let him still victor sway,
As battle hath adjudg'd, from this new world
Retiring, by his own doom alienated,
And henceforth monarchy with thee divide
Of all things parted by th' empyreal bounds, 380
His quadrature, from thy orbicular world,
Or try thee now more dang'rous to his throne.

Whom thus the prince of darkness answer'd glad.
Fair daughter, and thou son and grandchild both,
High proof ye now have giv'n to be the race 385
Of Satan (for I glory in the name,
Antagonist of Heav'n's almighty King)
Amplly have merited of me, of all
Th' infernal empire, that so near Heav'n's door
Triumphal with triumphal act have met, 390
Mine with this glorious work, and made one realm
Hell and this world, one realm, one continent
Of easy thorough-fare. Therefore while I
Descend through darkness, on your road with ease,
To my associate pow'rs, them to acquaint 395
With these successes, and with them rejoice;
You two this way, among these numerous orbs,
All yours, right down to Paradise descend;
There dwell and reign in bliss; thence on the earth
Dominion exercise, and in the air, 400
Chiefly on man, sole lord of all declar'd;
Him first make sure your thrall, and lastly kill.
My substitutes I send ye, and create
Plenipotent on earth, of matchless might
Issuing from me: on your joint vigour now 405
My hold of this new kingdom all depends,
Through sin to death expos'd by my exploit.
If your joint pow'r prevail, th' affairs of Hell
No detriment need fear; go and be strong.

So saying he dismiss'd them; they with speed 410
Their course through thickest constellations held,
Spreading their bane; the blasted stars look'd wan,
And planets, planet-struck, real eclipse
Then suffer'd. Th' other way Satan went down

The caufeway to Hell-gate; on either fide 415
Disparted Chaos over built exclaim'd,
And with rebounding furge the bars affail'd,
That fcorn'd his indignation: through the gate,
Wide open and unguarded, Satan pafs'd,
And all about found defolate; for thofe 420
Appointed to fit there, had left their charge,
Flown to the upper world; the reft were all
Far to th' inland retir'd, about the walls
Of Pandemonium, city and proud feat
Of Lucifer, fo by allufion call'd, 425
Of that bright ftar to Satan paragon'd.
There kept their watch the legions, while the grand
In council fat, folicitous what chance
Might intercept their emp'ror fent; fo he
Departing gave command, and they obferv'd. 430
As when the Tartar from his Ruffian foe,
By Afracan, over the fnowy plains
Retires, or Bactrian Sophi from the horns
Of Turkish crefcent, leaves all wafte beyond
The realm of Aladule, in his retreat 435
To Tauris or Calbeen: fo thefe the late
Heav'n-banish'd hoft, left defert utmoft Hell
Many a dark league, reduc'd in careful watch
Round their metropolis, and now expecting
Each hour their great advent'rer from the fearch 440
Of foreign worlds: he through the midft unmark'd,
In fhow plebian angel militant
Of loweft order, pafs'd; and from the door
Of that Plutonion hall, invifible
Ascended his high throne, which under ftate 445
Of richeft texture fpread, at th' upper end
Was plac'd in regal luftre. Down a while
He fat, and round about him faw unfeen:
At laft, as from a cloud, his fulgent head
And fhape ftar-bright appear'd, or brighter, clad 450
With what permiſſive glory fince his fall
Was left him, or falſe glitter: all amaz'd
At that fo fudden blaze the Stygian throng
Bent their afpect, and whom they wifh'd beheld,
Their mighty chief return'd: loud was th' acclaim: 455
Forth ruſh'd in haſte the great confulting peers,
Rais'd from their dark divan, and with like joy,

Congratulant approach'd him, who with hand
Silence, and with these words, attention won.

Thrones, dominations, principedoms, virtues, powers,
For in possession such, not only of right, 461

I call ye and declare ye now, return'd
Successful beyond hope, to lead ye forth

Triumphant out of this infernal pit

Abominable, accurs'd, the house of woe, 465

And dungeon of our tyrant : now possess,

As lords, a spacious world, to our native Heav'n

Little inferior, by my adventure hard

With peril great atchiev'd. Long were to tell

What I have done, what suffer'd, with what pain 470

Voyag'd th' unreal, vast, unbounded deep

Of horrible confusion, over which

By Sin and Death a broad way now is pav'd

To expedite your glorious march ; but I

Toil'd out my uncouth passage, forc'd to ride 475

Th' untractable abyss, plung'd in the womb

Of unoriginal Night and Chaos wild,

That, jealous of their secrets, fiercely oppos'd

My journey strange, with clamorous uproar

Protesting Fate supreme ; thence how I found 480

The new created world, which fame in Heav'n

Long had foretold ; a fabric wonderful

Of absolute perfection, therein man

Plac'd in a Paradise, by our exile

Made happy : him by fraud I have seduc'd 485

From his Creator, and the more to increase

Your wonder, with an apple ; he thereat

Offended, worth your laughter, hath giv'n up

Both his beloved man and all his world,

To Sin and Death a prey, and so to us, 490

Without our hazard, labour, or alarm,

To range in, and to dwell, and over man

To rule, as over all he should have rul'd.

True is, me also he hath judg'd, or rather

Me not, but the brute serpent, in whose shape 495

Man I deceiv'd : that which to me belongs,

Is enmity, which he will put between

Me and mankind ; I am to bruise his heel ;

His seed, when is not set, shall bruise my head :

A world who would not purchase with a bruise, 500

Or much more grievous pain? Ye have th' account
Of my performance : what remains, ye gods,
But up and enter now into full blifs?

So having said, a while he stood, expecting
Their universal shout and high applause 505
To fill his ear ; when contrary, he hears
On all sides, from innumerable tongues
A dismal universal hiss, the sound
Of public scorn ; he wonder'd, but not long
Had leisure, wond'ring at himself now more ; 510
His visage drawn he felt to sharp and spare,
His arms clung to his ribs, his legs intertwining
Each other, till supplanted down he fell
A monstrous serpent on his belly prone,
Reluctant ; but in vain, a greater pow'r 515
Now rul'd him, punish'd in the shape he sinn'd,
According to his doom : he would have spoke,
But hiss for hiss return'd with forked tongue
To forked tongue ; for now were all transform'd
Alike, to serpents all as accessories 520
To his bold riot : dreadful was the din
Of hissing through the hall, thick swarming now
With complicated monsters head and tail,
Scorpion, and Asp, and Amphibæna dire,
Cerastes horn'd, Hydrus, and Elops drear, 525
And Dipsas (not so thick swarm'd once the foil
Bedropt with blood of Gorgon, or the isle
Ophiusa) but still greatest he the midst,
Now dragon grown, larger than whom the sun
Ingender'd in the Pythian vale on slime, 530
Huge Python, and his pow'r no less he seem'd
Above the rest still to retain : they all
Him follow'd issuing forth to th' open field,
Where all yet left of that revolted rout
Heav'n-all'n, in station stood or just array, 535
Sublime with expectation, when to see
In triumph issuing forth their glorious chief:
They saw, but other sight instead, a croud
Of ugly serpents ; horror on them fell,
And horrid sympathy ; for what they saw, 540
They felt themselves now changing ; down their arms,
Down fell both spear and shield, down they as fast,
And the dire hiss renew'd, and the dire form

Catch'd by contagion, like in punishment,
As in their crime. Thus was th' applause, they meant,
Turn'd to exploding hiss, triumph to shame 546
Cast on themselves from their own mouths. Their stood
A grove hard by, sprung up with this their change,
His will who reigns above, to aggravate
Their pennance, laden with fair fruit, like that 550
Which grew in Paradise, the bait of Eve
Us'd by the tempter: on that prospect strange
Their earnest eyes they fix'd, imagining
For one forbidden tree a multitude

Now ris'n, to work them further woe or shame; 555
Yet parch'd with scalding thirst and hunger fierce,
Though to delude them sent, could not abstain;
But on they roll'd in heaps, and up the trees
Climbing, fat thicker than the snaky locks
That curi'd Megæra: greedily they pluck'd 560
That fruitage fair to sight, like that which grew
Near that bituminous lake where Sodom flam'd;
This more delusive, not the touch, but taste
Deceiv'd; they fondly thinking to allay
Their appetite with gust, instead of fruit 565
Chew'd bitter ashes, which th' offended taste
With spattering noise rejected: oft they essay'd,
Hunger and thirst constraining, drag'd as oft,
With hatefullest disrelish writh'd their jaws
With soot and cinders fill'd; so oft they fell 570
Into the same allusion, not as man
Whom they triumph'd once laps'd. Thus were they
plagu'd

And worn with famine, long and ceaseless hiss,
Till their lost shape, permitted, they resum'd,
Yearly injoin'd, some say, to undergo 575
This annual humbling certain number'd days,
To dash their pride, and joy for man seduc'd.
However, some tradition they dispers'd
Among the heathen of their purchase got,
And fabled how the serpent, whom they call'd 580
Ophion with Eurynome, the wide
Encroaching Eve perhaps, had first the rule
Of high Olympus, thence by Saturn driven
And Ops, ere yet Dictæan Jove was born.

Mean while in Paradise the hellish pair 585

Too soon arriv'd, Sin there in pow'r before,
Once actual, now in body, and to dwell
Habitual habitant; behind her Death
Close following pace for pace, not mounted yet
On his pale horse : to whom Sin thus began. 590

Second of Satan sprung, all conqu'ring Death,
What think'st thou of our empire now, though earn'd
With travel difficult, not better far
Than still at Hell's dark threshold to have sat watch,
Unnam'd, undreaded, and thyself half starv'd? 595

Whom thus the Sin-born monster answer'd soon.
To me, who with eternal famine pine,
Alike is Hell, or Paradise, or Heav'n,
There best, where most with ravin I may meet;
Which here, though plenteous, all too little seems 600
To stuff this maw, this vast unhide-bound corps.

To whom th' incestuous mother thus reply'd.
Thou therefore on these herbs, and fruits, and flow'rs
Feed first, on each beast next, and fish, and fowl,
No homely morsels; and whatever thing 605
The scythe of Time mowes down, devour unspar'd;
Till I in man residing through the race,
His thoughts, his looks, words, actions, all infect,
And season him thy last and sweetest prey.

This said, they both betook them several ways, 610
Both to destroy, or uninmortal make
All kinds, and for destruction to mature
Sooner or latter : which th' Almighty seeing,
From his transcendent seat the saints among,
To those bright orders utter'd thus his voice. 615

See with what heat those dogs of Hell advance
To waste and havock yonder world, which I
So fair and good created, and had still
Kept in that state, had not the folly of man
Let in these wasteful furies, who impute 620
Folly to me; so doth the prince of Hell,
And his adherents, that with so much ease
I suffer them to enter and possess
A place so heavenly, and conniving seem 625
To gratify my scornful enemies,
That laugh, as if transported with some fit
Of passion, I to them have quitted all,
At random yielded up to their misrule;

And know not that I call'd and drew them thither
My Hell-hounds, to lick up the draff and filth 530
Which man's pollutting sin with taint hath shed
On what was pure, till cramm'd and gorg'd, nigh burst
With suck'd and glutted offal, at one sling
Of thy victorious arm, well-pleasing Son,
Both Sin and Death, and yawning Grave at last 635
Through Chaos hurl'd, obstruct the mouth of Hell
For ever, and seal up his ravenous jaws.

Then Heav'n and Earth renew'd shall be made pure
To sanctity that shall receive no stain:
Till then the curse pronounc'd on both precedes. 640

He ended, and the heav'nly audience loud
Sung halleluiah, as the sound of seas,
Through multitude that sung: Just are thy ways,
Righteous are thy decrees on all thy works;
Who can extenuate thee? Next, to the Son, 645
Destin'd Restorer of mankind, by whom
New Heav'n and Earth shall to the ages rise,
Or down from Heav'n descend. Such was their song,
While the Creator calling forth by name
His mighty angels, gave them several charge, 650
As sort'd best with present things. The sun
Had first his precept so to move, so shine,
As might affect the earth with cold and heat
Scarce tolerable, and from the north to call
Decrepit winter, from the south to bring 655
Solstitial summer's heat. To the blanc moon
Her office they prescrib'd; to th' other five
Their planetary motions and aspects,
In sextile, square, and trine, and opposite
Of noxious efficacy, and when to join 660
In synod unbenign; and taught the fix'd
Their influence malignant when to show'r,
Which of them rising with the sun, or falling,
Should prove tempestuous: to the winds they set
Their corners, when with bluster to confound 665
Sea, air, and shore; the thunder when to roll
With terror through the dark aerial hall.
Some say he bid his angels turn ascanse
The poles of earth twice ten degrees and more
From the sun's axle; they with labour push'd 670
Oblique the centric globe: some say the sun

Was bid turn reins from th' equinoctial road
Like distant breadth to Taurus with the seven
Atlantic Sisters, and the Spartan Twins,
Up to the Tropic Crab; thence down amain 675
By Leo and the Virgin, and the Scales,
As deep as Capricorn, to bring in change
Of seasons to each clime; else had the spring
Perpetual smil'd on earth with vernant flow'rs,
Equal in days and nights, except to those 680
Beyond the polar circles; to them day
Had unbenighted shone, while the low sun,
To recompense his distance, in their sight
Had rounded still th' horizon, and not known
Or east or west, which had forbid the snow 685
From cold Estotiland, and south as far
Beneath Magellan. At that tasted fruit,
The sun, as from Thyestean banquet, turn'd
His course intended; else how had the world
Inhabited, though sinless, more than now, 690
Avoided pinching cold and scorching heat?
These changes in the Heav'ns, though slow, produc'd
Like change on sea and land, fideral blast,
Vapour, and mist, and exhalation hot,
Corrupt and pestilent: now from the north 695
Of Norumbega, and the Samoed shore,
Bursting their brazen dungeon, arm'd with ice
And snow, and hail, and stormy gust and flaw,
Boreas, and Cæcias, and Argestes loud,
And Thrafcias, rend the woods, and seas upturn; 700
With adverse blast upturns them from the south,
Notus and Afer black with thundrous clouds
From Serrationa; thwart of these as fierce
Forth rush the Levant and the Ponent winds,
Eurus and Zephyr, with their lateral noise, 705
Sirocco, and Libecchio. Thus began
Outrage from lifeless things: but Discord first,
Daughter of Sin, among th' irrational,
Death introduc'd through fierce antipathy:
Beast now with beast 'gan war, and fowl with fowl, 710
And fish with fish; to graze the herb all leaving,
Devour'd each other; nor stood much in awe
Of man, but fled him, or with count'nance grim
Glar'd on him passing. These were from without

The growing miseries which Adam saw 715
Already in part, though hid in gloomiest shade,
To sorrow abandon'd, but worse felt within,
And in a troubled sea of passion tost,
Thus to disburden fought with sad complaint.

O miserable of happy! is this the end 720
Of this new glorious world, and me so late
The glory of that glory, who now become
Accurs'd of blessed, hide me from the face
Of God, whom to behold was then my highth
Of happiness! yet well, if here would end 725

The misery; I deserv'd it, and would bear
My own deservings: but this will not serve;
All that I eat or drink, or shall beget,
Is propagated curse. O voice once heard
Delightfully, "Increase and multiply," 730
Now death to hear! for what can I increase
Or multiply, but curses on my head?

Who of all ages to succeed, but feeling
The evil on him brought by me, will curse
My head? Ill fare our ancestor impure, 735
For this we may thank Adam; but his thanks
Shall be the execration: so besides
Mine own that bide upon me, all from me
Shall with a fierce reflux on me redound,
On me as on their natural center light 740

Heavy, though in their place. O fleeting joys
Of Paradise, dear bought with lasting woes!
Did I request, thee, Maker, from my clay
To mould me man? Did I solicit thee
From darkness to promote me, or here place 945
In this delicious garden? As my will
Concurr'd not to my being, it were but right
And equal to reduce me to my dust,
Desirous to resign and render back
All I receiv'd, unable to perform 750

Thy terms too hard, by which I was to hold
The good I fought not. To the loss of that,
Sufficient penalty, why hast thou added
The sense of endless woes? inexplicable
Thy justice seems; yet, to say truth, too late 755
I thus contest; then should have been refus'd
Those terms whatever, when they were propos'd:

Thou didst accept them: Wilt thou enjoy the good,
Then cavil the conditions? And though God
Made thee without thy leave, what if thy son 760
Prove disobedient, and reprov'd, retort,
Wherefore didst thou beget me? I sought it not:
Wouldst thou admit for his contempt of thee
That proud excuse? yet him, not thy election,
But natural necessity, begot. 765
God made thee of choice his own, and of his own
To serve him; thy reward was of his grace,
Thy punishment then justly is at his will.
Be it so, for I submit; his doom is fair,
That dust I am, and shall to dust return: 770
O welcome hour whenever! why delays
His hand to execute what his decree
Fix'd on this day? why do I overlive?
Why am I mock'd with death, and lengthen'd out
To deathless pain? how gladly would I meet 775
Mortality my sentence, and be earth
Insensible? How glad would lay me down
As in my mother's lap? there should I rest
And sleep secure; his dreadful voice no more.
Would thunder in my ears, no fear of worse, 780
To me and to my offspring, would torment me
With cruel expectation. Yet one doubt
Pursues me still, lest all I cannot die;
Lest that pure breath of life, the sp'rit of man,
Which God inspir'd, cannot together perish 785
With this corporeal clod; then in the grave,
Or in some other dismal place, who knows
But I shall die a living death? O thought
Horrid, if true! yet why? it was but breath
Of life that sinn'd; what dies but what had life 790
And sin? the body properly hath neither,
All of me then shall die: let this appease
The doubt, since human reach no further knows.
For though the Lord of all be infinite,
Is his wrath also? be it, man is not so, 795
But mortal doom'd. How can he exercise
Wrath without end on man whom death must end?
Can he make deathless death? that were to make
Strange contradiction, which to God himself
Impossible is held, as argument 800

Of weakness, not of pow'r. Will he draw out,
For anger's sake, finite to infinite
In punish'd man, to satisfy his rigour
Satisfy'd never? that were to extend
His sentence beyond dust and nature's law, 805
By which all causes else according still
To the reception of their matter act,
Not to th' extent of their own sphere. But say
That death be not one stroke, as I suppos'd,
Bereaving sense, but endless misery 810
From this day onward, which I feel begun
Both in me, and without me, and so last
To perpetuity; ay me, that fear
Comes thund'ring back with dreadful revolution
On my defenceless head; both Death and I 815
Am found eternal, and incorporate both,
Nor I on my part single, in me all
Posterity stands curs'd: fair patrimony
That I must leave ye, sons; O were I able
To waste it all myself, and leave ye none! 820
So disinherited how would ye bless
Me now your curse! Ah, why should all mankind
For one man's fault thus guiltless be condemn'd,
If guiltless? But from me what can proceed,
But all corrupt, both mind and will deprav'd, 825
Not to do only, but to will the same
With me? How can they then acquitted stand
In sight of God? Him after all disputes
Forc'd I absolve: all my evasions vain,
And reasonings, though through mazes, lead me still 830
But to my own conviction: first and last
On me, me only, as the source and spring
Of all corruption, all the blame lights due;
So might the wrath. Fond wish! couldst thou support
That burden heavier than the earth to bear, 835
Than all the world much heavier, though divided
With that bad woman? Thus what thou desir'st,
And what thou fear'st, alike destroys all hope
Of refuge, and concludes thee miserable
Beyond all past example and future, 840
To Satan only like both crime and doom.
O conscience, into what abyss of fears
And horrors hast thou driv'n me; out of which
I find no way, from deep to deeper plung'd!

Thus Adam to himself lamented loud 845
Through the still night, not now, as ere man fell,
Wholesome, and cool, and mild, but with black air
Accompanied, with damps and dreadful gloom,
Which to his evil conscience represented
All things with double terror: on the ground 850
Outstretch'd he lay, on the cold ground, and oft
Curs'd his creation, death as oft accus'd
Of tardy execution, since denounc'd
The day of his offence. Why comes not death,
Said he, with one thrice acceptable stroke 855
To end me? Shall truth fail to keep her word,
Justice divine not hasten to be just?
But death comes not at call, Justice divine
Mends not her slowest pace for pray'rs or cries.
O woods, O fountains, hillocks, dales and bow'rs, 860
With other echo late I taught your shades
To answer, and resound far other song.
Whom thus afflicted when sad Eve beheld,
Desolate where she sat, approaching nigh,
Soft words to his fierce passion she assay'd: 865
But her with stern regard he thus repell'd.

Out of my sight, thou serpent; that name best
Befits thee with him leagu'd, thyself as false
And hateful; nothing wants, but that thy shape,
Like his, and colour serpentine, may show 870
Thy inward fraud, to warn all creatures from thee
Henceforth; lest that too heav'nly form, pretended
To hellish falsehood, snare them. But for thee
I had persisted happy, had not thy pride
And wand'ring vanity, when least was safe, 875
Rejected my forewarning, and disdain'd
Not to be trusted, longing to be seen,
Though by the Devil himself, him overweening
To over-reach, but with the serpent meeting
Fool'd and beguil'd; by him thou, I by thee, 880
To trust thee from my side, imagin'd wise,
Constant, mature, proof against all assaults,
And understood not all was but a show
Rather than solid virtue; all but a rib,
Crooked by nature, bent, as now appears, 885
More to the part sinister, from me drawn,
Well if thrown out, as supernumerary.

To my just number found. O why did God,
 Creator wise, that peopled highest Heav'n
 With spirits masculine, create at last 890
 This novelty on earth, this fair defect
 Of nature; and not fill the world at once
 With men as angels without feminine,
 Or find some other way to generate
 Mankind? This mischief had not then befall'n, 895
 And more that shall befall, innumerable
 Disturbances on earth through female snares,
 And strait conjunction with this sex: for either
 He never shall find out fit mate, but such
 As some misfortune brings him, or mistake; 900
 Or whom he wishes most shall seldom gain
 Through her perverseness; but shall see her gain'd
 By a far worse; or, if she love, with-held
 By parents; or his happiest choice too late
 Shall meet, already link'd and wedlock bound 905
 To a fell adversary, his hate or shame:
 Which infinite calamity shall cause
 To human life, and household-peace confound.

He added not, and from her turn'd; but Eve
 Not so repuls'd, with tears that ceas'd not flowing, 910
 And tresses all disorder'd, at his feet
 Fell humble, and, embracing them, besought
 His peace, and thus proceeded in her plaint.

Forsake me not thus, Adam, witness Heav'n
 What love sincere, and reverence in my heart 915
 I bear thee, and unweeting have offended,
 Unhappily deceiv'd; thy suppliant
 I beg, and clasp thy knees; bereave me not,
 Whereon I live, thy gentle looks, thy aid,
 Thy counsel in this uttermost distress, 920
 My only strength and stay: forlorn of thee,
 Whither shall I betake me, where subsist?
 While yet we live, scarce one short hour perhaps,
 Between us two let there be peace, both joining,
 As join'd in injuries, one enmity 925
 Against a foe by doom express assign'd us,
 That cruel serpent. On me exercise not
 Thy hatred for this misery befall'n,
 On me already lost, me than thyself
 More miserable; both have sinn'd, but thou 930

Against God only, I against God and thee,
And to the place of judgment will return,
There with my cries importune Heav'n, that all
The sentence from thy head remov'd may light
On me, sole cause to thee of all this woe, 935
Me, me only, just object of his ire.

She ended weeping; and her lowly plight,
Immovable till peace obtain'd from fault
Acknowledg'd and deplor'd, in Adam wrought
Commiseration; soon his heart relented 940
Towards her, his life so late and sole delight,
Now at his feet submissive in distress,
Creature so fair his reconciliation seeking,
His counsel whom she had displeas'd, his aid;
As one disarm'd, his anger all he lost, 945
And thus with peaceful words uprais'd her soon.

Unwary, and too desirous, as before,
So now of what thou know'st not, who desir'st
The punishment all on thyself; alas,
Bear thine own first, ill able to sustain 950
His full wrath, whose thou feel'st as yet least part,
And my displeasure bear'st so ill. If pray'rs
Could alter high decrees, I to that place
Would speed before thee, and be louder heard,
That on my head all might be visited, 955
Thy frailty and infirmer sex forgiv'n,
To me committed and by me expos'd.
But rise, let us no more contend, nor blame
Each other, blam'd enough elsewhere, but strive
In offices of love, how we may lighten 960
Each other's burden, in our share of woe;
Since this day's death denounc'd, if aught I see,
Will prove no sudden, but a slow-pac'd evil,
A long day's dying to augment our pain,
And to our seed (O hapless seed!) deriv'd. 965

To whom thus Eve, recovering heart, reply'd.
Adam, by sad experiment I know
How little weight my words with thee can find,
Found so erroneous, thence by just event
Found so unfortunate; nevertheless, 970
Restor'd by thee, vile as I am, to place
Of new acceptance, hopeful to regain
Thy love, the sole contentment of my heart,
Living or dying, from thee I will not hide

What thoughts in my unquiet breast are risen, 975
 Tending to some relief of our extremes,
 Or end, though sharp and sad, yet tolerable,
 As in our evils, and of easier choice.

If care of our descent perplex us most,
 Which must be born to certain woe, devour'd 980
 By Death at last; and miserable it is

To be to others cause of misery,
 Our own begotten, and of our loins to bring
 Into this cursed world a woful race,
 That after wretched life must be at last 985
 Food to so foul a monster; in thy pow'r

It lies, yet ere conception, to prevent
 The race unblest'd, to being yet unbegot.
 Childless thou art, childless remain: so Death
 Shall be deceiv'd his glut, and with us two 990
 Be forc'd to satisfy his ravenous maw.

But if thou judge it hard and difficult,
 Conversing, looking, loving, to abstain
 From love's due rites, nuptial embraces sweet,
 And with desire to languish without hope, 995
 Before the present object languishing

With like desire, which would be misery
 And torment less than none of what we dread;
 Then both ourselves and seed at once to free
 From what we fear for both, let us make short, 1000
 Let us seek Death, or he not found, supply
 With our own hands his office on ourselves:
 Why stand we longer shivering under fears,
 That show no end but death, and have the pow'r
 Of many ways to die, the shortest chusing, 1005
 Destruction with destruction to destroy?

She ended here, or vehement despair
 Broke off the rest; so much of death her thoughts
 Had entertain'd, as dy'd her cheeks with pale.
 But Adam, with such counsel nothing sway'd, 1010
 To better hopes his more attentive mind
 Lab'ring had rais'd, and thus to Eve reply'd.

Eve, thy contempt of life and pleasure seems
 To argue in thee something more sublime
 And excellent than what thy mind contemns; 1015
 But self-destruction therefore sought, refutes
 That excellence thought in thee, and implies,
 Not thy contempt, but anguish and regret

For loss of life and pleasure overlov'd.
Or if thou covet death, as utmost end 1020
Of misery, so thinking to evade
The penalty pronounc'd, doubt not but God
Hath wiselier arm'd his vengeful ire than so
To be forestall'd; much more I fear least death
So snatch'd will not exempt us from the pain 1025
We are by doom to pay; rather such acts
Of contumacy will provoke the Highest
To make death in us live: then let us seek
Some safer resolution, which methinks
I have in view, calling to mind with heed 1030
Part of our sentence, that thy seed shall bruise
The serpent's head; piteous amends, unless
Be meant, whom I conjecture, our grand foe
Satan, who in the serpent hath contriv'd
Against us this deceit: to crush his head 1035
Would be revenge indeed; which will be lost
By death brought on ourselves, or childless days
Resolv'd, as thou proposest; so our foe
Shall 'scape his punishment ordain'd, and we
Instead shall double ours upon our heads. 1040
No more be mention'd then of violence
Against ourselves, and wilful barrenness,
That cuts us off from hope, and favours only
Rancour and pride, impatience and despite,
Reluctance against God, and his just yoke 1045
Laid on our necks. Remember with what mild
And gracious temper he both heard and judg'd
Without wrath or reviling: we expected
Immediate dissolution, which we thought
Was meant by death that day; when lo, to thee 1050
Pains only in child-bearing were foretold,
And bringing forth, soon recompens'd with joy,
Fruit of thy womb: on me the curse aslope
Glanc'd on the ground; with labour I must earn
My bread; What harm? Idleness had been worse; 1055
My labour will sustain me; and, lest cold
Or heat should injure us, his timely care
Hath unbefought provided, and his hands
Cloth'd us unworthy, pitying while he judg'd:
How much more, if we pray him, will his ear 1060
Be open, and his heart to pity incline,
And teach us further by what means to shun

Th' inclement seasons, rain, ice, hail and snow?
 Which now the sky with various face begins
 To show us in this mountain, while the winds 1065
 Blow moist and keen, shattering the graceful locks
 Of these fair spreading trees; which bids us seek
 Some better shroud, some better warmth to cherish
 Our limbs benumb'd, ere this diurnal star
 Leave cold the night, how we his gather'd beams 1070
 Reflected, may with matter sere foment,
 Or by collision of two bodies grind
 The air attrite to fire, as late the clouds
 Jostling or push'd with winds rude in their shock
 Tine the flant lightning, whose thwart flame driv'n down
 Kindles the gummy bark of fir or pine, 1076
 And sends a comfortable heat from far,
 Which might supply the sun: such fire to use,
 And what may else be remedy or cure
 To evils which our own misdeeds have wrought, 1085
 He will instruct us praying, and of grace
 Beseeching him, so as we need not fear
 To pass commodiously this life, sustain'd
 By him with many comforts, till we end
 In dust, our final rest and native home. 1100
 What better can we do, than to the place
 Repairing where he judg'd us, prostrate fall
 Before him reverent, and there confess
 Humbly our faults, and pardon beg, with tears
 Watering the ground, and with our sighs the air 1090
 Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
 Of sorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek?
 Undoubtedly he will relent and turn
 From his displeasure; in whose look serene,
 When angry most he seem'd, and most severe, 1095
 What else but favour, grace, and mercy shone?
 So spake our father penitent; nor Eve
 Felt less remorse: they forthwith to the place
 Repairing where he judg'd them, prostrate fell
 Before him reverent, and both confess'd 1100
 Humbly their faults, and pardon begg'd, with tears
 Watering the ground, and with their sighs the air
 Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
 Of sorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek.

The End of the Tenth Book.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK XI.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Son of God presents to his Father the prayers of our first parents now repenting, and intercedes for them: God accepts them, but declares that they must no longer abide in Paradise; sends Michael with a band of cherubim to dispossess them; but first to reveal to Adam future things: Michael's coming down. Adam shows to Eve certain ominous signs; he discerns Michael's approach, goes out to meet him: the angel denounces their departure. Eve's lamentation. Adam pleads, but submits: the angel leads him up to a high hill, sets before him in vision what shall happen till the flood.

PARADISE LOST.

B O O K XI.

THUS they in lowliest plight repentant stood
Praying; for from the mercy-seat above
Prevenient grace descending had remov'd
The stony from their hearts, and made new flesh
Regenerate grow instead, that sighs now breath'd 5
Unutterable, which the spirit of pray'r
Inspir'd, and wing'd for Heav'n with speedier flight
Than loudest oratory: yet their port
Not of mean suitors, nor important less
Seem'd their petition, than when th' ancient pair 10
In fables old, less ancient yet than these,
Deucalion and chaste Phyrria, to restore
The race of mankind drown'd, before the shrine
Of Themis stood devout. To Heav'n their pray'rs
Flew up, nor miss'd the way, by envious winds 15
Blown vagabond or frustrate: in they pass'd
Dimensionless through heav'nly doors; then clad
With incense, where the golden altar fum'd,
By their great Intercessor, came in sight
Before the Father's throne: them the glad Son 20
Presenting, thus to intercede began.

See, Father, what first fruits on earth are sprung
From thy implanted grace in man, these sighs
And pray'rs, which in this golden censer, mix'd
With incense, I thy priest before thee bring; 25
Fruits of more pleasing favour from thy seed
Sown with contrition in his heart, than those

Which his own hand manuring all the trees
 Of Paradise could have produc'd, ere fall'n
 From innocence. Now therefore bend thine ear 30
 To supplication; hear his sighs though mute;
 Unskilful with what words to pray, let me
 Interpret for him, me his advocate
 And propitiation; all his works on me,
 Good or not good, ingraft; my merit those 35
 Shall perfect; and for these my death shall pay.
 Accept me, and in me from these receive
 The smell of peace toward mankind; let him live
 Before thee reconcil'd, at least his days
 Number'd, though sad, till death, his doom (which I 40
 To mitigate thus plead, not to reverse)
 To better life shall yield him, where with me
 All my redeem'd may dwell in joy and bliss,
 Made one with me, as I with thee am one.

To whom the Father, without cloud, serene. 45
 All thy request for man, accepted Son,
 Obtain; all thy request was my decree:
 But longer in that Paradise to dwell,
 The law I gave to nature him forbids:
 Those pure immortal elements, that know 50
 No gross, no unharmonious mixture foul,
 Eject him tainted now, and purge him off
 As a distemper, gross to air as gross,
 And mortal food, as may dispose him best
 For dissolution wrought by sin, that first 55
 Distemper'd all things, and of incorrupt
 Corrupted. I at first with two fair gifts
 Created him endow'd, with happiness
 And immortality: that fondly lost,
 This other serv'd but to eternize woe; 60
 Till I provided death; so death becomes
 His final remedy, and after life
 Try'd in sharp tribulation, and refin'd
 By faith and faithful works, to second life,
 Wak'd in the renovation of the just, 65
 Resigns him up with Heav'n and earth renew'd.
 But let us call to synod all the blest'd [hide
 Through Heav'n's wide bounds; from them I will not
 My judgments, how with mankind I proceed,
 As how with peccant angels late they saw, 70
 And in their state, though firm, stood more confirm'd.

He ended, and the Son gave signal high
To the bright minister that watch'd; he blew
His trumpet, heard in Oreb since perhaps
When God descended, and perhaps once more 75
To sound at general doom. Th' angelic blast
Fill'd all the regions: from their blissful bowers
Of aramantine shade, fountain or spring,
By the waters of life, where'er they sat
In fellowships of joy, the sons of light 80
Hasted, resorting to the summons high,
And took their seats; till from his throne supreme
Th' Almighty thus pronounc'd his sov'reign will.

O sons, like one of us man is become
To know both good and evil, since his taste 85
Of that defended fruit: but let him boast
His knowledge of good lost, and evil got,
Happier, had it suffic'd him to have known
Good by itself, and evil not at all.
He sorrows now, repents, and prays contrite, 90
My motions in him; longer than they move,
His heart I know, how variable and vain
Self-left. Lest therefore his now bolder hand
Reach also of the tree of life, and eat,
And live for ever, dream at least to live 95
For ever, to remove him I decree,
And send him from the garden forth to till
The ground whence he was taken, fitter soil.

Michael, thus my behest have thou in charge,
Take to thee from among the cherubim 100
Thy choice of flaming warriors, lest the fiend,
Or in behalf of man, or to invade
Vacant possession, some new trouble raise:
Haste thee, and from the Paradise of God
Without remorse drive out the sinful pair, 105
From hallow'd ground th' unholy, and denounce
To them and to their progeny from thence
Perpetual banishment. Yet lest they faint
At the sad sentence rigorously urg'd,
For I behold them soften'd, and with tears 110
Bewailing their excess, all terror hide.
If patiently thy bidding they obey,
Dismiss them not disconsolate; reveal
To Adam what shall come in future days,

As I shall thee enlighten; intermix 115
My covenant in the woman's seed renew'd;
So send them forth, though sorrowing, yet in peace:
And on the east side of the garden place,
Where entrance up from Eden easiest climbs,
Cherubic watch, and of a sword the flame 120
Wide waving, all approach far off to fright,
And guard all passage to the tree of life:
Lest Paradise a receptacle prove
To spirits foul, and all my trees their prey,
With whose stol'n fruit man once more to delude. 125

He ceas'd; and th' archangelic pow'r prepar'd
For swift descent; with him the cohort bright
Of watchful cherubim; four faces each
Had, like a double Janus, all their shape
Spangled with eyes, more numerous than those 130
Of Argus, and more wakeful than to drowse,
Charm'd with Arcadian pipe, the past'ral reed
Of Hermes, or his opiate rod. Mean while,
To resalute the world with sacred light,
Leucothea wak'd, and with fresh dews imbalm'd 135
The earth, when Adam and first matron Eve
Had ended now their orisons, and found
Strength added from above, new hope to spring
Out of despair, joy, but with fear yet link'd;
Which thus to Eve his welcome words renew'd. 140

Eve, easily may faith admit, that all
The good which we enjoy, from Heav'n descends;
But that from us aught should ascend to Heav'n
So prevalent as to concern the mind
Of God high-blest'd, or to incline his will, 145
Hard to belief may seem; yet this will prayer
Or one short sigh of human breath, upborne
Ev'n to the seat of God. For since I fought
By pray'r th' offended Deity to appease,
Kneel'd, and before him humbled all my heart, 150
Methought I saw him placable and mild,
Bending his ear; persuasion in me grew
That I was heard with favour; peace return'd
Home to my breast, and to my memory
His promise, that thy seed shall bruise our foe; 155
Which then not minded in disdain, yet now
Assures me that the bitterness of death

Is past, and we shall live. Whence hail to thee,
Eve rightly call'd, mother of all mankind,
Mother of all things living, since by thee 160
Man is to live, and all things live for man.

To whom thus Eve with sad demeanor meek.
Ill worthy I such title should belong
To me transgressor, who for thee ordain'd
A help, became thy snare; to me reproach 165
Rather belongs, distrust and all dispraise:
But infinite in pardon was my judge,
That I who first brought death on all, am grac'd
The source of life; next favourable thou,
Who highly thus to intitle me vouchsaf'ft, 170
Far other name deserving. But the field
To labour calls us now with sweat impos'd,
Though after sleepless night; for see the morn,
All unconcern'd with our unrest, begins
Her rosy progress smiling; let us forth; 175
I never from thy side henceforth to stray,
Where'er our day's work lies, though now injoin'd
Laborious, till day droop; while here we dwell
What can be toilsome in these pleasant walks?
Here let us live, though in fall'n state, content. 180

So spake, so wish'd much humbled Eve; but Fate
Subscrib'd not; Nature first gave signs, impress'd
On bird, beast, air, air suddenly eclips'd
After short blush of morn; nigh in her sight
The bird of Jove, stoop'd from his airy tour, 185
Two birds of gayest plume before him drove:
Down from a hill the beast that reigns in woods,
First hunter then, pursu'd a gentle brace,
Goodliest of all the forest, hart and hind;
Direct to the eastern gate was bent their flight. 190
Adam observ'd, and with his eye the chase
Pursuing, not unmov'd to Eve thus spake.

O Eve, some further change awaits us nigh,
Which Heav'n by these mute signs in nature shows,
Forerunners of his purpose, or to warn 195
Us haply too secure of our discharge
From penalty, because from death releas'd
Some days; how long, and what till then our life,
Who knows, or more than this, that we are dust,
And thither must return, and be no more? 200

Why else this double object in our sight
Of flight pursu'd in th' air, and o'er the ground,
One way the self-same hour? Why in the east
Darkness ere day's mid course, and morning light
More orient in yon western cloud, that draws 205
O'er the blue firmament a radiant white,
And slow descends, with something heav'nly fraught!

He err'd not, for by this the heav'nly bands
Down from a sky of jasper lighted now
In Paradise, and on a hill made halt; 210
A glorious apparition, had not doubt
And carnal fear that day dimm'd Adam's eye.
Not that more glorious, when the angels met
Jacob in Mahaniam, where he saw
The field pavilion'd with his guardians bright; 215
Nor that which on the flaming mount appear'd
In Dothan, cover'd with a camp of fire,
Against the Syrian king, who, to surprise
One man, assassin-like, had levied war,
War unproclaim'd. The princely hierarch 220
In their bright stand there left his pow'rs to seize
Possession of the garden; he alone,
To find where Adam shelter'd, took his way,
Not unperceiv'd of Adam, who to Eve,
While the great visitant approach'd, thus spake. 225

Eve, now expect great tidings, which perhaps
Of us will soon determine, or impose
New laws to be observ'd; for I descry,
From yonder blazing cloud that veils the hill,
One of the heav'nly host, and by his gait 230
None of the meanest, some great potentate,
Or of the thrones above, such majesty
Invests him coming; yet not terrible,
That I should fear, nor sociably mild,
As Raphael, that I should much confide, 235
But solemn and sublime, whom not to offend,
With reverence I must meet, and thou retire.

He ended; and th' archangel soon drew nigh,
Not in his shape celestial, but as man
Clad to meet man; over his lucid arms 240
A military vest of purple flow'd
Livelier than Melibœan, or the grain

Of Sarra, worn by kings and heroes old
In time of truce; Iris had dipp'd the woof;
His starry helm unbuckled show'd him prime 245
In manhood, where youth ended; by his side,
As in a glist'ring zodiac, hung the sword,
Satan's dire dread, and in his hand the spear.
Adam bow'd low; he kingly from his state
Inclin'd not, but his coming thus declar'd. 250

Adam, Heav'n's high behest no preface needs:
Sufficient that thy pray'rs are heard, and Death,
Then due by sentence when thou didst transgress,
Defeated of his seizure many days
Giv'n thee of grace, wherein thou mayst repent, 255
And one bad act with many deeds well done
Mayst cover: well may then thy Lord appear'd
Redeem thee quite from Death's rapacious claim;
But longer in this Paradise to dwell
Permits not; to remove thee I am come, 260
And send thee from the garden forth to till
The ground whence thou wast taken, fitter soil.

He added not, for Adam at the news
Heart-struck with chilling-gripe of sorrow stood,
That all his senses bound; Eve, who unseen 265
Yet all had heard, with audible lament
Discover'd soon the place of her retire.

O unexpected stroke, worse than of death!
Must I thus leave thee, Paradise? thus leave
Thee, native soil, these happy walks and shades, 270
Fit haunt of gods! where I had hope to spend,
Quiet though sad, the respite of that day
That must be mortal to us both. O flowers,
That never will in other climate grow,
My early visitation, and my last 275
At ev'n, which I bred up with tender hand
From the first opening bud, and gave ye names,
Who now shall rear ye to the sun, or rank
Your tribes, and water from th' ambrosial fount?
Thee lastly, nuptial bow'r, by me adorn'd 280
With what to sight or smell was sweet, from thee
How shall I part, and whither wander down
Into a lower world, to this obscure
And wild? how shall we breathe in other air
Less pure, accusom'd to immortal fruits? 285

Whom thus the angel interrupted mild.
Lament not, Eve, but patiently resign
What justly thou hast lost; nor set thy heart,
Thus overfond, on that which is not thine;
Thy going is not lonely; with thee goes 290
Thy husband; him to follow thou art bound;
Where he abides, think there thy native soil.

Adam by this from the cold sudden dainp
Recovering, and his scatter'd spirits return'd,
To Michael thus his humble words address'd. 295

Celestial, whether among the thrones, or nam'd
Of them the highest, for such of shape may seem
Prince above princes, gently hast thou told
Thy message, which might else in telling wound,
And in performing end us; what besides 300

Of sorrow, and dejection, and despair,
Our frailty can sustain, thy tidings bring,
Departure from this happy place, our sweet
Recess, and only consolation left 305

Familiar to our eyes; all places else
Inhospitable appear and desolate,
Nor knowing us nor known: and if by prayer
Incessant I could hope to change the will
Of him who all things can, I would not cease
To weary him with my assiduous cries: 310

But pray'r against his absolute decree
No more avails than breath against the wind,
Blown stifling back on him that breathes it forth:
Therefore to his great bidding I submit.

This most afflicts me, that departing hence, 315
As from his face I shall be hid, depriv'd

His blessed count'nance; here I could frequent
With worship place by place where he vouchsaf'd
Presence divine, and to my sons relate,
On this mount he appear'd, under this tree 320

Stood visible, among these pines his voice
I heard, here with him at this fountain talk'd:

So many grateful altars I would rear
Of grassy turf, and pile up every stone
Of lustre from the brook, in memory, 325

Or monument to ages, and thereon
Offer sweet smelling gums, and fruits, and flow'rs:
In yonder nether world where shall I seek

His bright appearances, or footstep trace?
For though I fled him angry, yet recall'd
To life prolong'd and promis'd race, I now
Gladly behold though but his utmost skirts
Of glory, and far off his steps adore.

To whom thus Michael with regard benign.
Adam, thou know'st Heav'n his, and all the earth, 335
Not this rock only; his omnipresence fills
Land, sea, and air, and every kind that lives,
Fomented by his virtual pow'r, and warm'd:
All th' earth he gave thee to possess and rule,
No despicable gift; surmise not then 340
His presence to these narrow bounds confin'd
Of Paradise or Eden: this had been
Perhaps thy capital seat, from whence had spread
All generations, and had hither come
From all th' ends of the earth, to celebrate 345
And reverence thee their great progenitor.
But this pre-eminence thou hast lost, brought down
To dwell on even ground now with thy sons:
Yet doubt not but in valley and in plain
God is as here, and will be found alike 350
Present, and of his presence many a sign
Still following thee, still compassing thee round
With goodness and paternal love, his face
Express, and of his steps the track divine.
Which that thou mayst believe, and be confirm'd 355
Ere thou from hence depart, know I am sent
To show thee what shall come in future days
To thee and to thy offspring; good with bad
Expect to hear, supernal grace contending
With sinfulness of men; thereby to learn 360
True patience, and to temper joy with fear
And pious sorrow, equally inur'd
By moderation, either state to bear,
Prosperous or adverse: so shalt thou lead
Safest thy life, and best prepar'd indure 365
Thy mortal passage when it comes. Ascend
This hill; let Eve (for I have drench'd her eyes)
Here sleep below, while thou to foresight wak'st;
As once thou sleptst, while she to life was form'd.

To whom thus Adam gratefully reply'd. 370
Ascend, I follow thee, safe guide, the path

Thou lead'st me, and to the hand of Heav'n submit,
However chaf'ning; to the evil turn
My obvious breast, arming to overcome
By suffering, and earn rest from labour won, 375
If so I may attain. So both ascend
In the visions of God: It was a hill
Of Paradise the highest, from whose top
The hemisphere of earth in clearest ken
Stretch'd out to th' amplest reach of prospect lay. 380
Not higher that hill, nor wider looking round,
Whereon for different cause the tempter set
Our second Adam in the wilderness,
To show him all earth's kingdoms and their glory.
His eye might there command wherever stood 385
City of old or modern fame, the seat
Of mightiest empire, from the destin'd walls
Of Cambula, seat of Cathaian Can,
And Samarchand by Oxus, Temir's throne,
To Paquin of Sinæan kings, and thence 390
To Agra and Lahor of great Mogul,
Down to the golden Chersonese, or where
The Persian or Ecbatan sat, or since
In Hispahan, or where the Russian Ksar
In Mosco, or the Sultan in Bizance, 395
Turchestian-born; nor could his eye not ken
Th' empire of Negus to his utmost port
Eroco, and the less maritime kings
Mombaza, and Quiloa, and Melind,
And Sofala thought Ophir, to the realm 400
Of Congo, and Angola farthest south;
Or thence from Niger flood to Atlas mount
The kingdoms of Almanzor, Fez and Sus,
Marocco and Algiers, and Tremisen;
On Europe thence, and where Rome was to sway 405
The world: in sp'rit perhaps he also saw
Rich Mexico the seat of Montezume,
And Gusco in Peru, the richer seat
Of Atabalipa, and yet unspoil'd
Guiana, whose great city Geryon's sons 410
Call El Dorado: but to nobler sights
Michael from Adam's eyes the film remov'd.
Which that false fruit, that promis'd clearer sight,
Had bred; then purg'd with euphrasy and rue

The visual nerve, for he had much to see; 415
And from the well of life three drops instill'd.
So deep the pow'r of these ingredients pierc'd,
E'en to the inmost seat of mental sight,
That Adam now enforc'd to close his eyes,
Sunk down, and all his spirits became intranc'd; 420
But him the gentle angel by the hand
Soon rais'd, and his attention thus recall'd.

Adam, now ope thine eyes, and first behold
Th' effects which thy original crime hath wrought
In some to spring from thee, who never touch'd 425
Th' excepted tree, nor with the snake conspir'd,
Nor sinn'd thy sin, yet from that sin derive
Corruption to bring forth more violent deeds.

His eyes he open'd, and beheld a field,
Part arable and tilth, whereon were sheaves 430
New reap'd, the other part sheep-walks and folds;
In th' midst an altar as the land-mark stood,
Rustice of grassy ford; thither anon
A sweaty reaper from his tillage brought
First fruits, the green ear, and the yellow sheaf, 435
Uncull'd, as came to hand; a shepherd next
More meek came with the firstlings of his flock
Choicest and best; then sacrificing, laid
The inwards and their fat, with incense strow'd,
On the cleft wood, and all due rites perform'd. 440
His offering soon propitious fire from Heav'n
Consum'd with nimble glance, and grateful steam;
The other's not, for his was not sincere;
Whereat he inly rag'd, and as they talk'd,
Smote him into the midriff with a stone 445
That beat out life; he fell, and deadly pale
Groan'd out his soul with gushing blood effus'd.
Much at that sight was Adam in his heart
Dismay'd, and thus in haste to th' angel cry'd.

O Teacher, some great mischief hath befall'n 450
To that meek man, who well had sacrific'd;
Is piety thus and pure devotion paid?

T' whom Michael thus, he also mov'd, reply'd.
These two are brethren, Adam, and to come
Out of thy loins; th' unjust the just hath slain, 455
For envy that his brother's offering found
From Heav'n acceptance; but the bloody fact

Will be aveng'd, and the other's faith approv'd
Lose no reward, though here thou see him die,
Rolling in dust and gore. To which our fire. 460

Alas, both for the deed and for the cause!
But have I now seen death? Is this the way
I must return to native dust? O sight
Of terror, foul and ugly to behold,
Horrid to think, how horrible to feel! 465

To whom thus Michael. Death thou hast seen
In his first shape on man; but many shapes
Of death, and many are the ways that lead
To his grim cave, all dismal; yet to sense
More terrible at th' entrance than within. 470

Some, as thou saw'st, by violent stroke shall die,
By fire, flood, famine, by intemp'rance more
In meats and drinks, which on the earth shall bring
Diseases dire, of which a monstrous crew
Before thee shall appear; that thou may'st know 475

What misery th' inabstinence of Eve
Shall bring on men. Immediately a place
Before his eyes appear'd, sad, noisome, dark,
A lazar-house it seem'd, wherein were laid
Numbers of all diseas'd, all maladies 480

Of ghastly spasm, or racking torture, qualms
Of heart-sick agony, all feverous kinds,
Convulsions, epilepsies, fierce catarrhs,
Intestine stone and ulcer, colic pangs,
Demoniac phrenzy, moping melancholy, 485

And moon-struck madness, pining atrophy,
Marasmus, and wide-wasting pestilence,
Dropries, and asthmas, and joint racking rheums.
Dire was the tossing, deep the groans; Despair
Tended the sick, busiest from couch to couch; 490

And over them triumphant Death his dart
Shook, but delayed to strike, though oft invoc'd
With vows, as their chief good, and final hope.
Sight so deform what heart of rock could long
Dry-ey'd behold? Adam could not, but wept, 495

Though not of woman born; compassion quell'd
His best of man, and gave him up to tears
A space, till firmer thoughts restrain'd excess;
And scarce recovering words his plaint renew'd.

O miserable mankind, to what fall
Degraded, to what wretched state reserv'd!
Better end here unborn. Why is life giv'n
To be thus wrested from us? rather why
Obtruded on us thus? who, if we knew
What we receive, would either not accept
Life offer'd, or soon beg to lay it down,
Glad to be so dismiss'd in peace. Can thus,
Th' image of God in man, created once
So goodly and erect, though faulty since,
To such unsightly sufferings be debas'd
Under inhuman pains? Why should not man,
Retaining still divine similitude
In part, from such deformities be free,
And for his Maker's image sake exempt?

Their Maker's image, answer'd Michael, then
Forsook them, when themselves they vilify'd
To serve ungovern'd appetite, and took
His image whom they serv'd, a brutish vice,
Inductive mainly to the sin of Eve.
Therefore so abject is their punishment,
Disfiguring not God's likeness, but their own;
Or if his likeness, by themselves defac'd,
While they pervert pure nature's healthful rules
To loathsome sickness, worthily, since they
God's image did not reverence in themselves.

I yield it just, said Adam, and submit.
But is there yet no other way, besides
These painful passages, how we may come
To death, and mix with our connatural dust?

There is, said Michael, if thou well observe
The rule of not too much, by temp'rance taught,
In what thou eat'st and drink'st, seeking from thence
Due nourishment, not gluttonous delight,
Till many years over thy head return:
So may'st thou live, till like ripe fruit thou drop
Into thy mother's lap, or be with ease
Gather'd, not harshly pluck'd, for death mature:
This is old age; but then thou must outlive
Thy youth, thy strength, thy beauty, which will change
To wither'd, weak, and gray; thy senses then
Obtuse, all taste of pleasure must forgo,
To what thou hast; and for the air of youth,

Hopeful and chearful, in thy blood will reign
A melancholy damp of cold and dry
To weigh thy spirits down, and last consume 545
The balm of life. To whom our ancestor.

Henceforth I fly not death, nor would prolong
Life much, bent rather how I may be quit
Fairest and easiest of this cumbrous charge,
Which I must keep till my appointed day 550
Of rend'ring up, and patiently attend
My dissolution. Michael reply'd.

Nor love thy life, nor hate; but what thou liv'st,
Live well; how long or short, permit to Heav'n:
And now prepare thee for another fight. 555

He look'd, and saw a spacious plain, whereon
Were tents of various hue: by some were herds
Of cattle grazing; others, whence the sound
Of instruments that made melodious chime
Was heard, of harp and organ; and who mov'd 560
Their stops and chords was seen; his volant touch
Instinct through all proportions, low and high
Fled, and pursu'd transverse the resonant fugue.
In other part stood one who at the forge
Lab'ring, two massy clods of iron and brass 565
Had melted, (whether found where casual fire
Had wasted woods in mountain or in vale,
Down to the veins of earth, thence gliding hot
To some cave's mouth, or whether wash'd by stream
From underground) the liquid ore he drain'd 570
Into fit molds prepar'd; from which he form'd
First his own tools; the nwhat might else be wrought,
Fusil or grav'n in metal. After these,
But on the hither side, a different sort

From the high neighb'ring hills, which was their feat, 575
Down to the plain descended: by their guise
Just men they seem'd, and all their study bent
To worship God aright, and know his works
Not hid, nor those things last which might preserve
Freedom and peace to men: they on the plain 580
Long had not walk'd, when from the tents behold
A bevy of fair women, richly gay
In gems and wanton drefs; to th' harp they sung
Soft amorous ditties, and in dance came on:
The men, tho' grave, ey'd them, and let their eyes 585

Rove without rein, till in the amorous net
Fast caught, they lik'd, and each his liking chose;
And now of love they treat, till th' evening star,
Love's harbinger, appear'd; then all in heat
They light the nuptial torch, and bid invoke 590
Hymen, then first to marriage rites invoc'd:
With feast and music all the tents resound.

Such happy interview and fair event
Of love and youth not lost, songs, garlands, flow'rs,
And charming symphonies, attach'd the heart 595
Of Adam, soon inclin'd t' admit delight,
The bent of nature; which he thus express'd.

True opener of mine eyes, prime angel blest'd,
Much better seems this vision, and more hope
Of peaceful days portends, than those two past: 600
Those were of hate and death, or pain much worse;
Here nature seems fulfill'd in all her ends.

To whom thus Michael. Judge not what is best
By pleasure, though to nature seeming meet,
Created, as thou art, to nobler end 605
Holy and pure, conformity divine.

Those tents thou saw'st so pleasant, were the tents
Of wickedness, wherein shall dwell his race
Who slew his brother; studious they appear
Of arts that polish life, inventors rare, 610
Unmindful of their Maker, though his spirit
Taught them, but they his gifts acknowledg'd none.
Yet they a beauteous offspring shall beget:

For that fair female troop thou saw'st, that seem'd
Of goddesses, so blithe, so smooth, so gay, 615
Yet empty of all good, wherein consists

Woman's domestic honour and chief praise;
Bred only and completed to the taste
Of lustful appetite, to sing, to dance,
To dress, and troll the tongue, and roll the eye. 620

To these that sober race of men, whose lives
Religious titled them the sons of God,
Shall yield up all their virtue, all their fame
Ignobly, to the trains and to the smiles
Of these fair atheists, and now swim in joy, 625
Ere long to swim at large; and laugh, for which
The world ere long a world of tears must weep.

To whom thus Adam, of short joy bereft.

O pity and shame, that they who to live well
Enter'd so fair, should turn aside to tread 630
Paths indirect, or in the midway faint!
But still I see the tenor of man's woe
Holds on the same, from woman to begin.

From man's effeminate slackness it begins,
Said th' angel, who should better hold his place 635
By wisdom and superior gifts receiv'd.
But now prepare thee for another scene.

He look'd, and saw wide territory spread
Before him, towns, and rural works between,
Cities of men with lofty gates and tow'rs, 640
Concourse in arms, fierce faces threat'ning war,
Giants of mighty bone, and bold emprise;
Part wield their arms, part curb the foaming steed,
Single or in array of battle rang'd

Both horse and foot, nor idly must'ring stood; 645
One way a band select from forage drives
A herd of beeves, fair oxen and fair kine
From a fat meadow-ground, or fleecy flock,
Ewes and their bleating lambs over the plain,

Their booty; scarce with life the shepherds fly, 650
But call in aid, which makes a bloody fray:
With cruel torneament the squadrons join;
Where cattle pastur'd late, now scatter'd lies
With carcasses and arms th' infanguin'd field

Deserted: others to a city strong 655
Lay siege, incamp'd; by batt'ry, scale, and mine,
Assaulting; others from the wall defend
With dart and javelin, stones and sulphurous fire;
On each hand slaughter and gigantic deeds.

In other parts, the scepter'd heralds call 660
To council in the city-gates: anon
Gray-headed men and grave, with warriors mix'd,
Assemble, and harrangues are heard, but soon
In factious opposition; till at last

Of middle age one rising, eminent 665
In wise deport, spake much of right and wrong,
Of justice, of religion, truth and peace,
And judgment from above: him old and young
Exploded, and had seiz'd with violent hands,

Had not a cloud descending snatch'd him thence 670
Unseen amid the throng: so violence

Proceeded, and oppression, and sword-law,
Through all the plain, and refuge none was found.
Adam was all in tears, and to his guide
Lamenting turn'd full sad; O what are these, 675
Death's ministers, not men, who thus deal death
Inhumanly to men, and multiply
Ten thousand fold the sin of him who slew
His brother: for of whom such massacre
Make they but of their brethren, men of men? 680
But who was that just man, whom had not Heav'n
Rescu'd, had in his righteousness been lost?

To whom thus Michael. These are the product
Of those ill mated marriages thou saw'st;
Where good with bad were match'd, who of themselves
Abhor to join; and by imprudence mix'd, 686
Produce prodigious births of body or mind.
Such were these giants, men of high renown;
For in those days might only shall be admir'd,
And valour and heroic virtue call'd; 690
To overcome in battle, and subdue
Nations, and bring home spoils with infinite
Man-slaughter, shall be held the highest pitch
Of human glory, and for glory done
Of triumph, to be stil'd great conquerors, 695
Patrons of mankind, gods, and sons of gods,
Destroyers rightlier call'd, and plagues of men.
Thus fame shall be atchiev'd, renown on earth,
And what most merits fame in silence hid.
But he, the sev'nth from thee, whom thou beheldst 600
The only righteous in a world perverse,
And therefore hated, therefore so beset
With foes, for daring single to be just,
And utter odious truth, that God would come
To judge them with his saints: him the Most High 705
Rapt in a balmy cloud with winged steeds
Did, as thou saw'st, receive, to walk with God
High in salvation in the climes of bliss,
Exempt from death; to show thee what reward
Awaits the good, the rest what punishment; 710
Which now direct thine eyes, and soon behold.

He look'd, and saw the face of things quite chang'd;
The brazen throat of war had ceas'd to roar;
All now was turn'd to jollity and game,

To luxury and riot, feast and dance, 715
Marrying or prostituting, as besel,
Rape or adultery, where passing fair
Allur'd them; thence from cups to civil broils.
At length a reverend fire among them came,
And of their doings great dislike declar'd, 720
And testify'd against their ways; he oft
Frequented their assemblies, whereso met,
Triumphs or festivals, and to them preach'd
Conversion and repentance, as to souls
In prison under judgments imminent: 725
But all in vain: which when he saw, he ceas'd
Contending, and remov'd his tents far off:
Then from the mountain hewing timber tall,
Began to build a vessel of huge bulk,
Measur'd by cubit, length, and breadth, and highth, 730
Smear'd round with pitch, and in the side a door
Contriv'd, and of provisions laid in large
For man and beast; when lo a wonder strange!
Of every beast, and bird, and insect small
Came sev'ns, and pairs, and enter'd in, as taught 735
Their order: last the fire, and his three sons,
With their four wives; and God made fast the door.
Mean while the south wind rose, and with black wings
Wide hovering, all the clouds together drove
From under Heav'n; the hills to their supply 740
Vapour and exhalation dusk and moist,
Sent up amain; and now the thicken'd sky
Like a dark cieling stood; down rush'd the rain
Impetuous, and continued till the earth
No more was seen: the floating vessel swum 745
Uplifted, and secure with beaked prow
Rode tilting o'er the waves; all dwellings else
Flood overwhelm'd, and them with all their pomp
Deep under water roll'd; sea cover'd sea,
Sea without shore; and in their palaces, 750
Where luxury late reign'd, sea-monsters whelp'd
And stabled; of mankind, so numerous late,
All left in one small bottom swum embark'd.
How didst thou grieve then, Adam, to behold
The end of all thy offspring, end so sad, 755
Depopulation? thee another flood,
Of tears and sorrow a flood, thee also drown'd,

And suck thee as thy sons; till gently rear'd
By th' angel, on thy feet thou stood'st at last,
Though comfortless, as when a father mourns 760
His children, all in view destroy'd at once;
And scarce to th' angel utter'd this thy plaint.

O visions ill foreseen! better had I
Liv'd ignorant of future, so had borne
My part of evil only, each day's lot 765
Enough to bear; those now, that were dispens'd
The burd'n of many ages, on me light
At once, by my foreknowledge gaining birth
Abortive, to torment me ere their being
With thought that they must be. Let no man seek 770
Henceforth to be foretold what shall befall
Him or his children; evil he may be sure,
Which neither his foreknowing can prevent,
And he the future evil shall no less
In apprehension than in substance feel 775
Grievous to bear: but that care now is past,
Man is not whom to warn: those few escap'd
Famine and anguish will at last consume,
Wand'ring that wat'ry desert: I had hope,
When violence was ceas'd, and war on earth, 780
All would have then gone well, peace would have crown'd
With length of happy days the race of man;
But I was far deceiv'd; for now I see
Peace to corrupt no less than war to waste.
How comes it thus? unfold, celestial guide, 785
And whether here the race of man will end.

To whom thus Michael. Those whom last thou saw'st
In triumph and luxurious wealth, are they
First seen in acts of prowess eminent
And great exploits, but of true virtue void; 790
Who having spilt much blood, and done much waste
Subduing nations, and atchiev'd thereby
Fame in the world, high titles and rich prey,
Shall change their course to pleasure, ease, and sloth,
Surfeit, and lust, till wantonness and pride 795
Raise out of friendship hostile deeds in peace.
The conquer'd also, and enslav'd by war
Shall with their freedom lost, all virtue lose,
And fear of God, from whom their piety feign'd
In sharp contest of battle found no aid 800

Against invaders; therefore cool'd in zeal
Thenceforth shall practice how to live secure,
Wordly or dissolute, on what their lords
Shall leave them to enjoy; for th' earth shall bear
More than enough, that temp'rance may be try'd: 805
So all shall turn degenerate, all deprav'd,
Justice and temp'rance, truth and faith forgot;
One man except, the only son of light
In a dark age, against example good,
Against allurements, custom, and a world 810
Offended; fearless of reproach and scorn,
Or violence, he of their wicked ways
Shall them admonish, and before them set
The paths of righteousness, how much more safe,
And full of peace, denouncing wrath to come 815
On their impenitence; and shall return
Of them derided, but of God observ'd
The one just man alive; by his command
Shall build a wondrous ark, as thou beheldst,
To save himself and household from amidst 820
A world devote to universal wrack.
No sooner he with them of man and beast
Select for life shall in the ark be lodg'd,
And shelter'd round, but all the cataracts
Of Heav'n set open on the earth shall pour 825
Rain day and night; all fountains of the deep
Broke up, shall heave the ocean to usurp
Beyond all bounds, till inundation rise
Above the highest hills: then shall this mount
Of Paradise by might of waves be mov'd 830
Out of his place, push'd by the horned flood,
With all his verdure spoil'd, and trees adrift,
Down the great river to the opening gulf,
And there take root an island salt and bare,
The haunt of seals, and orcs, and sea-mews' clang: 835
To teach thee that God attributes to place
No sanctity, if none be thither brought
By men who there frequent, or therein dwell.
And now what further shall ensue, behold.
He look'd, and saw the ark hull on the flood, 840
Which now abated; for the clouds were fled,
Driv'n by a keen north wind, that blowing dry
Wrinkled the face of deluge, as decay'd;

And the clear sun on his wide wat'ry glass
Gaz'd hot, and of the fresh wave largely drew, 845
As after thirst, which made their flowing shrink
From standing lake to tripping ebb, that stole
With soft foot towards the deep, who now had stopt
Her sluices, as the Heav'n his windows shut.
The ark no more now floats, but seems on ground, 850
Fast on the top of some high mountain fix'd.

And now the tops of hills as rocks appear;
With clamour thence the rapid currents drive
Towards the retreating sea their furious tide.
Forthwith from out the ark a raven flies, 855

And after him, the surer messenger,
A dove sent forth once and again to spy
Green tree or ground whereon his foot may light;
The second time returning, in his bill
An olive leaf he brings, pacific sign: 860

Anon dry ground appears, and from his ark
The ancient sire descends with all his train;
Then with uplifted hands, and eyes devout,
Grateful to Heav'n, over his head beholds
A dewy cloud, and in the cloud a bow 865

Conspicuous with three list'd colours gay,
Betokening peace from God, and covenant new.
Whereat the heart of Adam, erst so sad,
Greatly rejoic'd, and thus his joy broke forth.

O thou who future things can represent 870
As present, heav'nly instructor, I revive
At this last sight, assur'd that man shall live
With all the creatures, and their seed preserve.

Far less I now lament for one whole world
Of wicked sons destroy'd, than I rejoice 875
For one man found so perfect and so just,
That God vouchsafes to raise another world
From him, and all his anger to forget.

But say, what mean those colour'd streaks in Heav'n
Distended as the brow of God appeas'd; 880
Or serve they as a flow'ry verge to bind
The fluid skirts of that same wat'ry cloud,
Lest it again dissolve, and flow'r the earth?

To whom th' archangel. Dextrously thou aim'st;
So willingly doth God remit his ire, 885
Though late repenting him of man deprav'd,

Griev'd at his heart, when looking down he saw
 The whole earth fill'd with violence, and all flesh
 Corrupting each their way ; yet those remov'd,
 Such grace shall one just man find in his sight, 890
 That he relents, not to blot out mankind,
 And makes a covenant never to destroy
 The earth again by flood, nor let the sea
 Surpass his bounds, nor rain to drown the world
 With man therein or beast ; but when he brings 895
 Over the earth a cloud, will therein set
 His triple-colour'd bow, whereon to look,
 And call to mind his covenant : day and night,
 Seed-time and harvest, heat and hoary frost
 Shall hold their course, till fire purge all things new, 900
 Both Heav'n and earth, wherein the just shall dwell.

The End of the Eleventh Book.

THE ACCOUNT
OF THE
PARADISE LOST.

B O O K XII.

THE ARGUMENT.

The angel Michael continues from the flood to relate what shall succeed ; then, in the mention of Abraham, comes by degrees to explain who that seed of the woman shall be, which was promised Adam and Eve in the fall ; his incarnation, death, resurrection and ascension ; the state of the church till his second coming. Adam, greatly satisfied and comforted by these relations and promises, descends the hill with Michael ; wakens Eve, who all this while had slept ; but with gentle dreams compos'd to quietness of mind and submission. Michael in either hand leads them out of Paradise, the fiery sword waving behind them, and the cherubim taking their stations to guard the place.

PARADISE LOST.

B O O K XII.

AS one who in his journey baits at noon,
Though bent on speed; so here th' archangel
paus'd

Betwixt the world destroy'd and world restor'd,
If Adam aught perhaps might interpose;
Then with transition sweet new speech resumes. 5

Thus thou hast seen one world begin and end;
And man as from a second stock proceed.
Much thou hast yet to see, but I perceive
Thy mortal sight to fail; objects divine
Must needs impair and weary human sense: 10
Henceforth what is to come I will relate,
Thou therefore give due audience, and attend.

This second source of men, while yet but few,
And while the dread of judgment past remains
Fresh in their minds, fearing the Deity, 15
With some regard to what is just and right
Shall lead their lives, and multiply apace,
Lab'ring the soil, and reaping plenteous crop,
Corn, wine and oil; and from the herd or flock,
Oft sacrificing bullock, lamb, or kid, 20
With large wine offerings pour'd, and sacred feast,
Shall spend their days in joy unblam'd, and dwell
Long time in peace by families and tribes
Under paternal rule: till one shall rise
Of proud ambitious heart, who not content 25
With fair equality, fraternal state,

Will arrogate dominion undeserv'd
Over his brethren, and quite dispossess
Concord and law of nature from the earth,
Hunting (and men not beasts shall be his game) 30
With war and hostile snare such as refuse
Subjection to his empire tyrannous :
A mighty hunter thence he shall be stil'd
Before the Lord, as in despite of Heaven,
Or from Heav'n claiming second sov'reignty ; 35
And from rebellion shall derive his name,
Though of rebellion others he accuse.
He with a crew, whom like ambition joins
With him or under him to tyrannize,
Marching from Eden towards the west, shall find 40
The plain, wherein a black butuminous gurge
Boils out from under ground, the mouth of Hell :
Of brick, and of that stuff they cast to build
A city and tow'r, whose top may reach to Heav'n ;
And get themselves a name, lest far dispers'd 45
In foreign lands, their memory be lost,
Regardless whether good or evil fame.
But God, who oft descends to visit men
Unseen, and through their habitations walks
To mark their doings, them beholding soon, 50
Comes down to see their city, ere the tow'r
Obstruct Heav'n-tow'rs, and in derision sets
Upon their tongues a various sp'rit to raze
Quite out their native language, and instead
To sow a jangling noise of words unknown : 55
Forthwith a hideous gabble rises loud
Among the builders ; each to other calls
Not understood, till hoarse, and all in rage,
As mock'd they storm ; great laughter was in Heav'n
And looking down, to see the hubbub strange 60
And hear the din ; thus was the building left
Ridiculous, and the work Confusion nam'd.

Whereto thus Adam, fatherly displeas'd.

O execrable son so to aspire

Above his brethren, to himself assuming 65

Authority usurp'd, from God not given :

He gave us only over beast, fish, fowl,

Dominion absolute ; that right we hold

By his donation ; but man over men

He made not lord ; such title to himself 70
Reserving, human left from human free.
But this usurper his encroachment proud
Stays not on man ; to God his tow'r intends
Siege and defiance : wretched man ! what food
Will he convey up thither to sustain 75
Himself and his rash army, where thin air
Above the clouds will pine his entrails gross,
And famish him of breath, if not of bread ?

To whom thus Michael. Justly thou abhorr'st
That son, who on the quiet state of men 80
Such trouble brought, affecting to subdue
Rational liberty ; yet know withal,
Since thy original lapse, true liberty
Is lost, which always with right reason dwells
Twinn'd, and from her hath no dividual being : 85
Reason in man obscur'd, or not obey'd,
Immediately inordinate desires
And upstart passions catch the government
From reason, and to servitude reduce
Man till then free. Therefore since he permits 90
Within himself unworthy pow'rs to reign
Over free reason, God in judgment just
Subjects him from without to violent lords ;
Who oft as undeservedly inthrall
His outward freedom : tyranny must be, 95
Though to the tyrant thereby no excuse.
Yet sometimes nations will decline so low
From virtue, which is reason, that no wrong,
But justice, and some fatal curse annex'd,
Deprives them of their outward liberty, 100
Their inward lost : Witness th' irreverent son
Of him who built the ark, who for the shame
Done to his father, heard this heavy curse,
“ Servant of servants,” on his vicious race.
Thus will this latter, as the former world, 105
Still tend from bad to worse, till God at last,
Wearied with their iniquities, withdraw
His presence from among them, and avert
His holy eyes ; resolving from thenceforth
To leave them to their own polluted ways ; 110
And one peculiar nation to select
From all the rest, of whom to be invok'd,

A nation from one faithful man to spring:
 Him on this side Euphrates yet residing,
 Bred up in idol-worship; O that men 115
 (Canst thou believe?) should be so stupid grown,
 While yet the patriarch liv'd, who 'scap'd the flood,
 As to forsake the living God, and fall
 To worship their own work in wood and stone
 For gods? yet him God the Most High vouchsafes 120
 To call by vision from his father's house,
 His kindred and false gods, into a land
 Which he will shew him, and from him will raise
 A mighty nation, and upon him show'r
 His benediction so, that in his seed 125
 All nations shall be bless'd; he strait obeys,
 Not knowing to what land, yet firm believes:
 I see him, but thou canst not, with what faith
 He leaves his gods, his friends, and native soil
 Ur of Chaldæa, passing now the ford 130
 To Haran, after him a cumbrous train
 Of herds, and flocks, and numerous servitude;
 Not wand'ring poor, but trusting all his wealth
 With God, who call'd him, in a land unknown.
 Canaan he now attains: I see his tents 135
 Pitch'd about Sechem, and the neighb'ring plain
 Of Moreh; there by promise he receives
 Gift to his progeny of all that land,
 From Hamath northward to the desert south,
 (Things by their names I call, though yet unnam'd)
 From Hermon east to the great western sea; 140
 Mount Hermon, yonder sea, each place behold
 In prospect, as I point them; on the shore
 Mount Carmel; here the double-founted stream
 Jordan, true limit eastward; but his sons 145
 Shall dwell to Senir, that long ridge of hills.
 This ponder, that all nations of the earth
 Shall in his seed be blessed; by that seed
 Is meant thy great Deliverer, who shall bruise
 The serpent's head; whereof to thee anon 150
 Plainlier shall be reveal'd. This patriarch bless'd,
 Whom faithful Abraham due time shall call,
 A son, and of his son a grandchild leaves,
 Like him in faith, in wisdom, and renown;
 The grandchild with twelve sons increas'd departs

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 From Canaan, to a land hereafter call'd 156
 Egypt, divided by the river Nile;
 See where it flows, disgorging at sev'n mouths
 Into the sea: to sojourn in that land
 He comes invited by a younger son 160
 In time of dearth, a son whose worthy deeds
 Raise him to be the second in that realm
 Of Pharaoh: there he dies, and leaves his race
 Growing into a nation, and now grown
 Suspected to a sequent king, who seeks 165
 To stop their overgrowth, as inmate guests
 Too numerous; whence of guests he makes them slaves
 Inhospitably, and kills their infant males:
 Till by two brethren (those two brethren call
 Moses and Aaron) sent from God to claim 170
 His people from inthralment, they return
 With glory and spoil back to their promis'd land.
 But first the lawless tyrant, who denies
 To know their God, or message to regard,
 Must be compell'd by signs and judgments dire; 175
 To blood unshed the rivers must be turn'd;
 Frogs, lice, and flies must all his palace fill
 With loath'd intrusion, and fill all the land;
 His cattle must of rot and murren die;
 Botches and blains must all his flesh imboss, 180
 And all his people; thunder mix'd with hail,
 Hail mix'd with fire, must rend th' Egyptian sky,
 And wheel on th' earth, devouring where it rolls;
 What it devours not, herb, or fruit, or grain,
 A darksome cloud of locusts swarming down 185
 Must eat, and on the ground leave nothing green;
 Darknes must overshadow all his bounds,
 Palpable darknes, and blot out three days;
 Last with one midnight-stroke all the first-born
 Of Egypt must lie dead. Thus with ten wounds 190
 The river-dragon tam'd at length submits
 To let his sojourners depart, and oft
 Humbles his stubborn heart, but still as ice,
 More harden'd after thaw, till in his rage
 Pursuing whom he late dismiss'd, the sea 195
 Swallows him with his host, but them lets pass
 As on dry land between two crystal walls,
 Aw'd by the rod of Moses so to stand

Divided, till his rescued gain their shore :
Such wondrous pow'r God to his faint will lend, 200
Though present in his angel, who shall go
Before them in a cloud, and pillar of fire,
By day a cloud, by night a pillar of fire,
To guide them in their journey, and remove
Behind them, while th' obdurate king pursues : 205
All night he will pursue, but his approach
Darkness defends between till morning watch ;
Then through the fiery pillar and the cloud
God looking forth will trouble all his host,
And craze their chariot-wheels : when by command 210
Moses once more his potent rod extends
Over the sea ; the sea his rod obeys ;
On their imbattl'd ranks the waves return,
And overwhelm their war : the race elect
Safe towards Canaan from the shore advance 215
Through the wild desert, not the readiest way,
Lest entering on the Canaanite alarm'd
War terrify them inexpert, and fear
Return them back to Egypt, chusing rather
Inglorious life with servitude ; for life 220
To noble and ignoble is more sweet
Untrain'd in arms, where rashness leads not on.
This also shall they gain by their delay
In the wide wilderness, there they shall found
Their government, and their great senate chuse 225
Through the twelve tribes, to rule by laws ordain'd :
God from the mount of Sinai, whose gray top
Shall tremble, he descending, will himself
In thunder, lightning, and loud trumpets found,
Ordain them laws ; part such as appertain 230
To civil justice, part religious rites
Of sacrifice, informing them, by types
And shadows, of that destin'd Seed to bruise
The serpent, by what means he shall atchieve
Mankind's deliverance. But the voice of God 235
To mortal ear is dreadful ; they beseech
That Moses might report to them his will,
And terror cease ; he grants what they besought,
Instructed that to God is no access
Without mediator, whose high office now 240
Moses in figure bears, to introduce

One greater, of whose day he shall foretel,
And all the prophets in their age the times
Of great Messiah shall sing. Thus laws and rites
Establish'd, such delight hath God in men. 245
Obedient to his will, that he vouchsafes
Among them to set up his tabernacle,
The holy One with mortal men to dwell:
By his prescript a sanctuary is fram'd
Of cedar, overlaid with gold, therein 250
An ark, and in the ark his testimony,
The records of his covenant; over these
A mercy-seat of gold between the wings
Of two bright cherubim; before him burn
Sev'n lamps as in a zodiac, representing 255
The heav'nly fires; over the tent a cloud
Shall rest by day, a fiery gleam by night,
Save when they journey, and at length they come,
Conducted by his angel to the land
Promis'd to Abraham and his seed. The rest 260
Were long to tell, how many battles fought,
How many kings destroy'd, and kingdoms won,
Or how the sun shall in mid Heav'n stand still
A day entire, and night's due course adjourn,
Man's voice commanding, Sun in Gibeon stand, 265
And thou Moon in the vale of Aialon,
Till Israel overcome; so call the third
From Abraham, son of Isaac, and from him
His whole descent, who thus shall Canaan win.

Here Adam interpos'd. O sent from Heav'n, 270
Inlightner of my darkness, gracious things
Thou hast reveal'd, those chiefly which concern
Just Abraham and his seed: now first I find
Mine eyes true opening, and my heart much eas'd,
Erewhile perplex'd with thoughts what would become
Of me and all mankind; but now I see 276
His day, in whom all nations shall be blest'd,
Favour unmerited by me, who fought
Forbidden knowledge by forbidden means.
This yet I apprehend not, why to those 280
Among whom God will deign to dwell on earth
So many and so various laws are given;
So many laws argue so many sins
Among them; how can God with such reside?

To whom thus Michael. Doubt not but that sin 285
Will reign among them, as of thee begot;
And therefore was law given them to evince
Their natural pravity, by stirring up
Sin against law to fight: that when they see
Law can discover sin, but not remove, 290
Save by those shadowy expiations weak,
The blood of bulls and goats, they may conclude
Some blood more precious must be paid for man,
Just for unjust, that in such righteousness
To them by faith imputed, they may find 295
Justification towards God, and peace
Of conscience, which the law by ceremonies
Cannot appease, nor man the moral part
Perform, and not performing cannot live.
So law appears imperfect, and but given 300
With purpose to resign them in full time
Up to a better covenant, disciplin'd
From shadowy types to truth, from flesh to spirit,
From imposition of strict laws to free
Acceptance of large grace, from servile fear 305
To filial, works of law to works of faith.
And therefore shall not Moses, though of God
Highly belov'd, being but the minister
Of law, his people into Canaan lead;
But Joshua, whom the Gentiles Jesus call, 310
His name and office bearing, who shall quell
The adversary serpent, and bring back
Through the world's wilderness long wander'd man
Safe to eternal Paradise of rest.
Mean while they in their earthly Canaan plac'd 315
Long time shall dwell and prosper, but when sins
National interrupt their public peace,
Provoking God to raise them enemies;
From whom as oft he saves them penitent
By judges first, then under kings; of whom 320
The second, both for piety renown'd
And puissant deeds, a promise shall receive
Irrevocable, that his regal throne
For ever shall indure; the like shall sing
All prophecy, that of the royal stock 325
Of David (so I name this king) shall rise
A Son, the woman's seed to thee foretold,

Foretold to Abraham, as in whom shall trust
All nations, and to kings foretold, of kings
The last, for of his reign shall be no end. 330
But first a long succession must ensue,
And his next son, for wealth and wisdom fam'd,
The clouded ark of God, till then in tents
Wand'ring, shall in a glorious temple inshrine.
Such follow him as shall be register'd 335
Part good, part bad, of bad the longer scroll;
Whose foul idolatries, and other faults
Heap'd to the popular sum, will so incense
God, as to leave them, and expose their land,
Their city, his temple, and his holy ark, 340
With all his sacred things, a scorn and prey
To that proud city, whose high walls thou saw'st
Left in confusion, Babylon thence call'd.
There in captivity he lets them dwell
The space of sev'nty years, then brings them back,
Remembring mercy, and his covenant sworn 346
To David, stablish'd as the days of Heav'n.
Return'd from Babylon by leave of kings
Their lords, whom God dispos'd, the house of God
They first re-edify, and for a while 350
In mean estate live moderate, till grown
In wealth and multitude, factious they grow;
But first among the priests dissension springs,
Men who attend the altar, and should most
Endeavour peace: their strife pollution brings 355
Upon the temple itself: at last they seize
The scepter, and regard not David's sons,
Then lose it to a stranger, that the true
Anointed king Messiah might be born.
Barr'd of his right; yet at his birth a star, 360
Unseen before in Heav'n, proclaims him come,
And guides the eastern sages, who inquire
His place, to offer incense, myrrh, and gold;
His place of birth a solemn angel tells
To simple shepherds, keeping watch by night; 365
They gladly thither haste, and by a quire
Of squadron'd angels hear his carol sung.
A virgin is his mother, but his sire
The pow'r of the Most High; he shall ascend.

The throne hereditary, and bound his reign 370
With earth's wide bounds, his glory with the Heav'ns.

He ceas'd, discerning Adam with such joy
Surcharg'd, as had like grief been dew'd in tears,
Without the vent of words, which these he breath'd.

O prophet of glad tidings, finisher 375
Of utmost hope! now clear I understand
What oft my steddier thoughts have search'd in vain;
Why our great expectation should be call'd

The seed of woman: Virgin Mother, hail,
High in the love of Heav'n, yet from my loins 380
Thou shalt proceed, and from thy womb the Son
Of God Most High; so God with man unites.

Needs must the serpent now his capital bruise
Expect with mortal pain: say where and when 384
Their fight, what stroke shall bruise the victor's heel?

To whom thus Michael. Dream not of their fight,
As of a duel, or the local wounds

Of head or heel: not therefore joins the Son
Manhood to Godhead, with more strength to foil
Thy enemy; nor so is overcome 390

Satan, whose fall from Heav'n, a deadlier bruise,
Disabled not to give thee thy death's wound:

Which he, who comes thy Saviour, shall recure,
Not by destroying Satan, but his works

In thee and in thy seed: nor can this be, 395
But by fulfilling that which thou didst want,

Obedience to the law of God, impos'd

On penalty of death, and suffering death,

The penalty to thy transgression due,

And due to theirs which out of thine will grow: 400
So only can high justice rest appaid.

The law of God exact he shall fulfil,

Both by obedience and by love, though love

Alone fulfil the law; thy punishment

He shall indure, by coming in the flesh 405

To a reproachful life and cursed death,

Proclaiming life to all who shall believe

In his redemption, and that his obedience

Imputed becomes theirs by faith, his merits

To save them, not their own, though legal works. 410

For this he shall live hated, be blasphem'd,

Seiz'd on by force, judg'd, and to death condemn'd

A shameful and accurs'd, nail'd to the cross
By his own nation, slain for bringing life;
But to the cross he nails thy enemies, 415
The law that is against thee, and the sins
Of all mankind, with him there crucify'd,
Never to hurt them more who rightly trust
In this his satisfaction; so he dies,
But soon revives; death over him no pow'r 420
Shall long usurp; ere the third dawning light
Return, the stars of morn shall see him rise
Out of his grave, fresh as the dawning light,
Thy ransom paid, which man from death redeems,
His death for man, as many as offer'd life 425
Neglect not, and the benefit embrace
By faith not void of works: this God-like act
Annuls thy doom, the death thou shouldst have dy'd,
In sin for ever lost from life; this act
Shall bruise the head of Satan, crush his strength, 430
Defeating Sin and Death, his two main arms,
And fix far deeper in his head their stings
Than temp'ral death shall bruise the victor's heel,
Or theirs whom he redeems, a death-like sleep,
A gentle wafting to immortal life. 435
Nor after resurrection shall he stay
Longer on earth than certain times to appear
To his disciples, men who in his life
Still follow'd him; to them shall leave in charge
To teach all nations what of him they learn'd 440
And his salvation; them who shall believe
Baptizing in the profluent stream, the sign
Of washing them from guilt of sin to life
Pure, and in mind prepar'd, if so befall,
For death, like that which the Redeemer dy'd. 445
All nations they shall teach; for from that day
Not only to the sons of Abraham's loins
Salvation shall be preach'd, but to the sons
Of Abraham's faith wherever through the world;
So in his seed all nations shall be blest'd. 450
Then to the Heav'n of Heav'ns he shall ascend
With victory, triumphing through the air
Over his foes and thine; there shall surprise
The serpent, prince of air, and drag in chains

Through all his realm, and there confounded leave ;
Then enter into glory, and resume 456
His seat at God's right hand, exalted high
Above all names in Heav'n; and thence shall come,
When this world's dissolution shall be ripe,
With glory and pow'r to judge both quick and dead,
To judge th' unfaithful dead, but to reward 461
His faithful, and receive them into bliss,
Whether in Heav'n or earth, for then the earth
Shall all be Paradise, far happier place
Than this of Eden, and far happier days. 465

So spake th' archangel Michael, then paus'd,
As at the world's great period; and our sire,
Replete with joy and wonder, thus reply'd.

O Goodness infinite, Goodness immense!
That all this good of evil shall produce, 470
And evil turn to good; more wonderful
Than that which by creation first brought forth
Light out of darkness! full of doubt I stand,
Whether I should repent me now of sin
By me done and occasion'd, or rejoice 475
Much more, that much more good thereof shall spring,
To God more glory, more good will to men
From God, and over wrath grace shall abound.
But say, if our Deliverer up to Heaven
Must re-ascend, what will betide the few 480
His faithful, left among th' unfaithful herd,
His enemies of truth? Who then shall guide
His people, who defend? Will they not deal
Worse with his followers than with him they dealt?

Be sure they will, said th' angel; but from Heav'n
He to his own a Comforter will send, 486
The promise of the Father, who shall dwell
His Spirit within them, and the law of faith
Working through love, upon their hearts shall write,
To guide them in all truth, and also arm 490
With spiritual armour, able to resist
Satan's assaults, and quench his fiery darts,
What man can do against them, not afraid,
Though to the death, against such cruelties
With inward consolations recompens'd, 495
And oft supported so as shall amaze

Their proudest persecutors : for the Spirit
Pour'd first on his Apostles, whom he sends
To evangelize the nations, then on all
Baptiz'd, shall them with wondrous gifts indue 500
To speak all tongues, and do all miracles,
As did their Lord before them. Thus they win
Great numbers of each nation to receive
With joy the tidings brought from Heav'n : at length
Their ministry perform'd, and race well run, 505
Their doctrine and their story written left,
They die ; but in their room, as they forewarn,
Wolves shall succeed for teachers, grievous wolves,
Who all the sacred mysteries of Heav'n
To their own vile advantages shall turn 510
Of lucre and ambition, and the truth
With superstitions and traditions taint,
Left only in those written records pure,
Though not but by the Spirit understood.
Then shall they seek to avail themselves of names,
Places, and titles, and with these to join 516
Secular pow'r, though feigning still to act
By spiritual, to themselves appropriating
The Sp'rit of God, promis'd alike and given
To all believers ; and from that pretence, 520
Spiritual laws by carnal pow'r shall force
On every conscience ; laws which none shall find
Left them inroll'd, or what the Sp'rit within
Shall on the heart engrave. What will they then
But force the Sp'rit of grace itself, and bind 525
His consort liberty ? what, but unbuild
His living temples, built by faith to stand,
Their own faith not anothers ? for on earth
Who against faith and conscience can be heard
Infallible ? yet many will presume : 530
Whence heavy persecution shall arise
On all who in the worship persevere
Of sp'rit and truth ; the rest, far greater part,
Will deem in outward rites and specious forms
Religion satisfy'd ; truth shall retire 535
Bestuck with stand'rous darts, and works of faith
Rarely be found : so shall the world go on,
To good malignant, to bad men benign,
Under her own weight groaning, till the day

Appear of respiration to the just, 540
And vengeance to the wicked, at return
Of him so lately promis'd to thy aid
The woman's Seed, obscurely then foretold,
Now amplier known thy Saviour and thy Lord,
Last in the clouds from Heav'n to be reveal'd 545
In glory of the Father, to dissolve
Satan with his perverted world, then raise
From the conflagrant mass, purg'd and refin'd,
New Heav'ns, new earth, ages of endless date
Founded in righteousness, and peace, and love, 550
To bring forth fruits, joy and eternal bliss.

He ended; and thus Adam last reply'd.
How soon hath thy prediction, seer blest'd,
Measur'd this transient world, the race of time,
Till time stand fix'd! beyond is all abyss, 555
Eternity, whose end no eye can reach.
Greatly instructed I shall hence depart,
Greatly in peace of thought, and have my fill
Of knowledge, what this vessel can contain;
Beyond which was my folly to aspire. 560
Henceforth I learn, that to obey is best,
And love with fear the only God, to walk
As in his presence, ever to observe
His providence, and on him sole depend,
Merciful over all his works, with good 565
Still overcoming evil, and by small
Accomplishing great things, by things deem'd weak
Subverting worldly strong, and worldly wise
By simply meek; that suffering for truth's sake
Is fortitude to highest victory, 570
And to the faithful death the gate of life;
Taught this by his example, whom I now
Acknowledge my Redeemer ever blest'd.

To whom thus also th' angel last reply'd.
This having learn'd, thou hast attain'd the sum 575
Of wisdom; hope no higher, though all the stars
Thou knew'st by name, and all th' ethereal pow'rs,
All secrets of the deep, all Nature's works,
Or works of God in Heav'n, air, earth, or sea,
And all the riches of this world enjoy'dst, 580
And all the rule, one empire; only add
Deeds to thy knowledge answerable, add faith,

Add virtue, patience, temperance, add love,
By name to come call'd Charity, the soul
Of all the rest: then will thou not be loath 585
To leave this Paradise, but shalt possess
A Paradise within thee, happier far.

Let us descend now therefore from this top
Of speculation; for the hour precise

Exacts our parting hence; and see the guards, 590

By me incamp'd on yonder hill, expect
Their motion, at whose front a flaming sword,
In signal of remove, waves fiercely round;

We may no longer stay: go, waken Eve;
Her also I with gentle dreams have calm'd 595

Portending good, and all her sp'rits compos'd
To meek submission: thou at season fit

Let her with thee partake what thou hast heard,
Chiefly what may concern her faith to know,

The great deliverance by her Seed to come 600

(For by the woman's seed) on all mankind:

That ye may live, which will be many days,

Both in one faith unanimous, though sad,

With cause for evils past, yet much more chear'd

With meditation on the happy end. 605

He ended, and they both descend the hill;

Descended, Adam to the bow'r where Eve

Lay sleeping ran before, but found her wak'd;

And thus with words not sad she him receiv'd.

Whence thou return'st, and whither went'st, I know;

For God is also in sleep, and dreams advise, 611

Which he hath sent propitious, some great good

Presaging, since with sorrow and heart's distress

Wearied I fell asleep: but now lead on;

In me is no delay; with thee to go, 615

Is to stay here; without thee here to stay,

Is to go hence unwilling; thou to me

Art all things under Heav'n, all places thou,

Who for my wilful crime art banish'd hence.

This further consolation yet secure 620

I carry hence; though all by me is lost,

Such favour I unworthy am vouchsaf'd,

By me the promis'd Seed shall all restore.

So spake our mother Eve, and Adam heard

Well pleas'd, but answer'd not; for now too nigh 625

Th' archangel stood, and from the other hill
To their fix'd station, all in bright array,
The cherubim descended; on the ground
Gliding meteorous, as evening mist
Ris'n from a river o'er the marsh glides, 630
And gathers ground fast at the lab'rer's heel
Homeward returning. High in front advanc'd,
The brandish'd sword of God before them blaz'd
Fierce as a comet; which with torrid heat,
And vapour as the Libyan air adust, 635
Began to parch that temp'rate clime; whereat
In either hand the hast'ning angel caught
Our ling'ring parents, and to th' eastern gate
Led them direct, and down the cliff as fast
To the subjected plain; then disappear'd. 640
They looking back, all th' eastern side beheld
Of Paradise, so late their happy seat,
Wav'd over by that flaming brand, the gate
With dreadful faces throng'd and fiery arms:
Some natural tears they dropt, but wip'd them soon;
The world was all before them, where to chuse 645
Their place of rest, and Providence their guide:
They hand in hand, with wand'ring steps and slow,
Through Eden took their solitary way.

THE END.



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